MARVEL COMICS

5 great stories inside!

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.

21st August 1996 #231 £1.10

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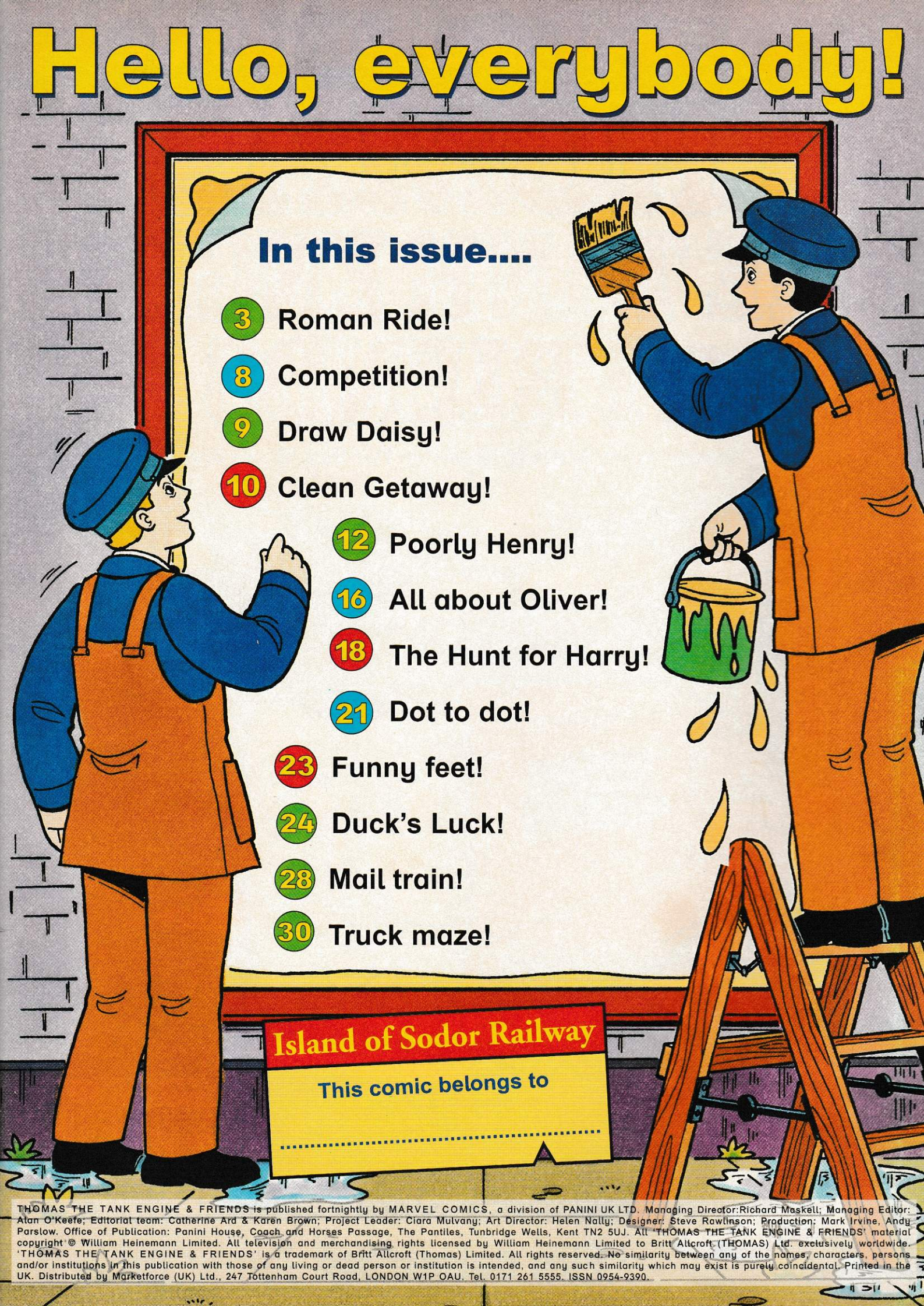
Great games! Fun colouring! Super prizes!

Hello, everybody!



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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

.....

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS is published fortnightly by MARVEL COMICS, a division of PANINI UK LTD. Managing Director:Richard Maskell; Managing Editor: Alan O'Keefe; Editorial team: Catherine Ard & Karen Brown; Project Leader: Ciara Mulvany; Art Director: Helen Nally; Designer: Steve Rawlinson; Production: Mark Irvine, Andy Parslow. Office of Publication: Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ.

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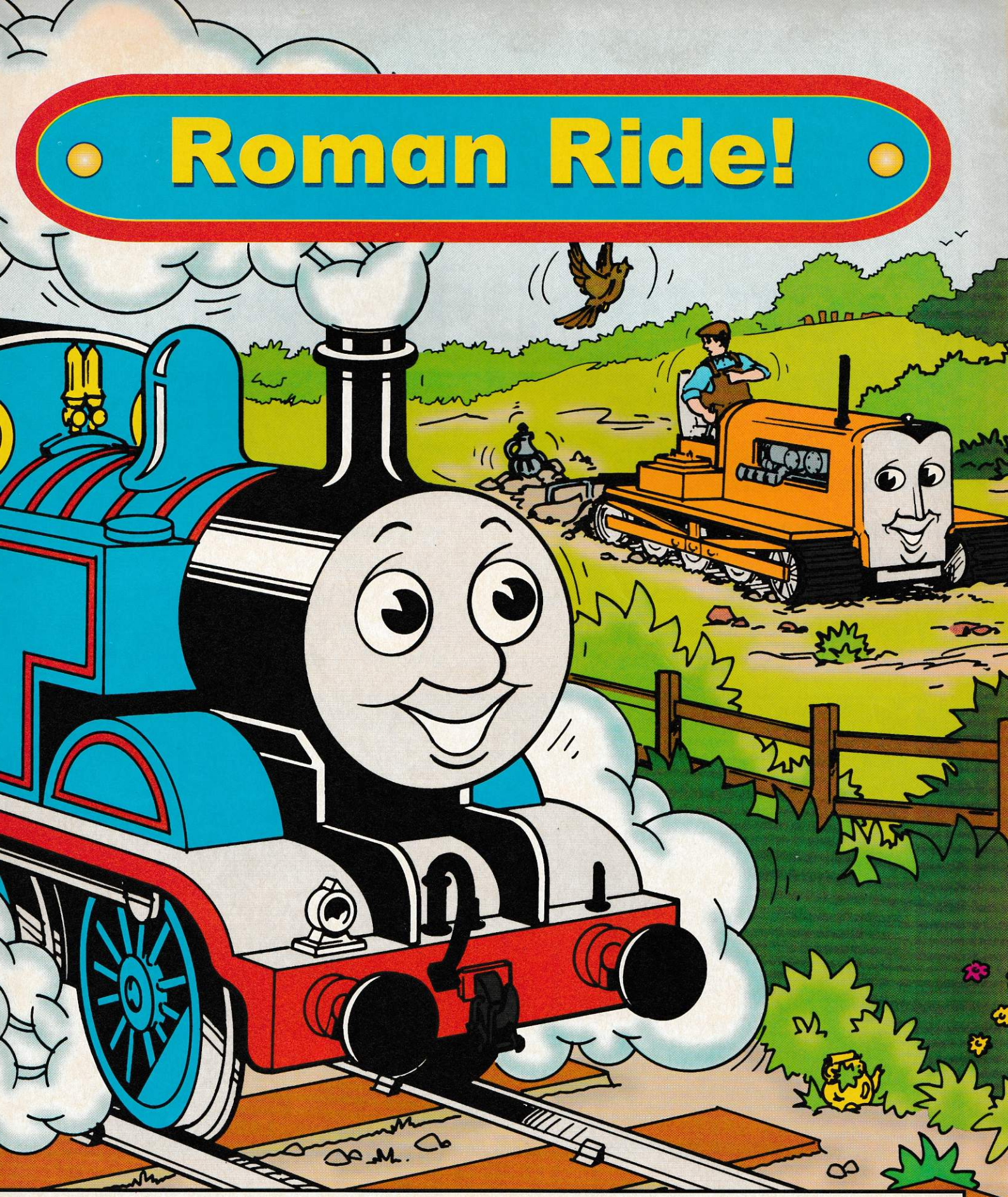
Printed in the UK. Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd., 247 Tottenham Court Road, LONDON W1P OAU. Tel. 0171 261 5555. ISSN 0954-9390.

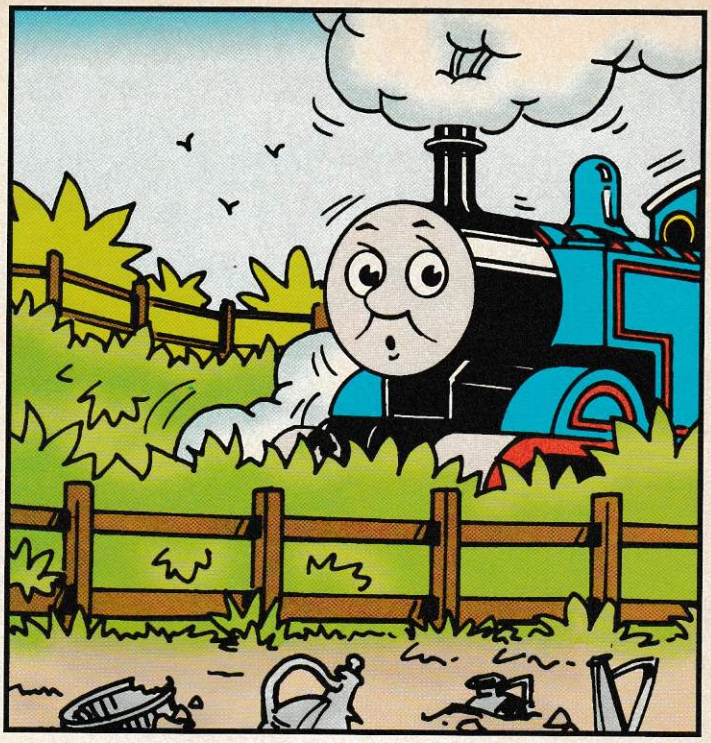
Roman Ride!



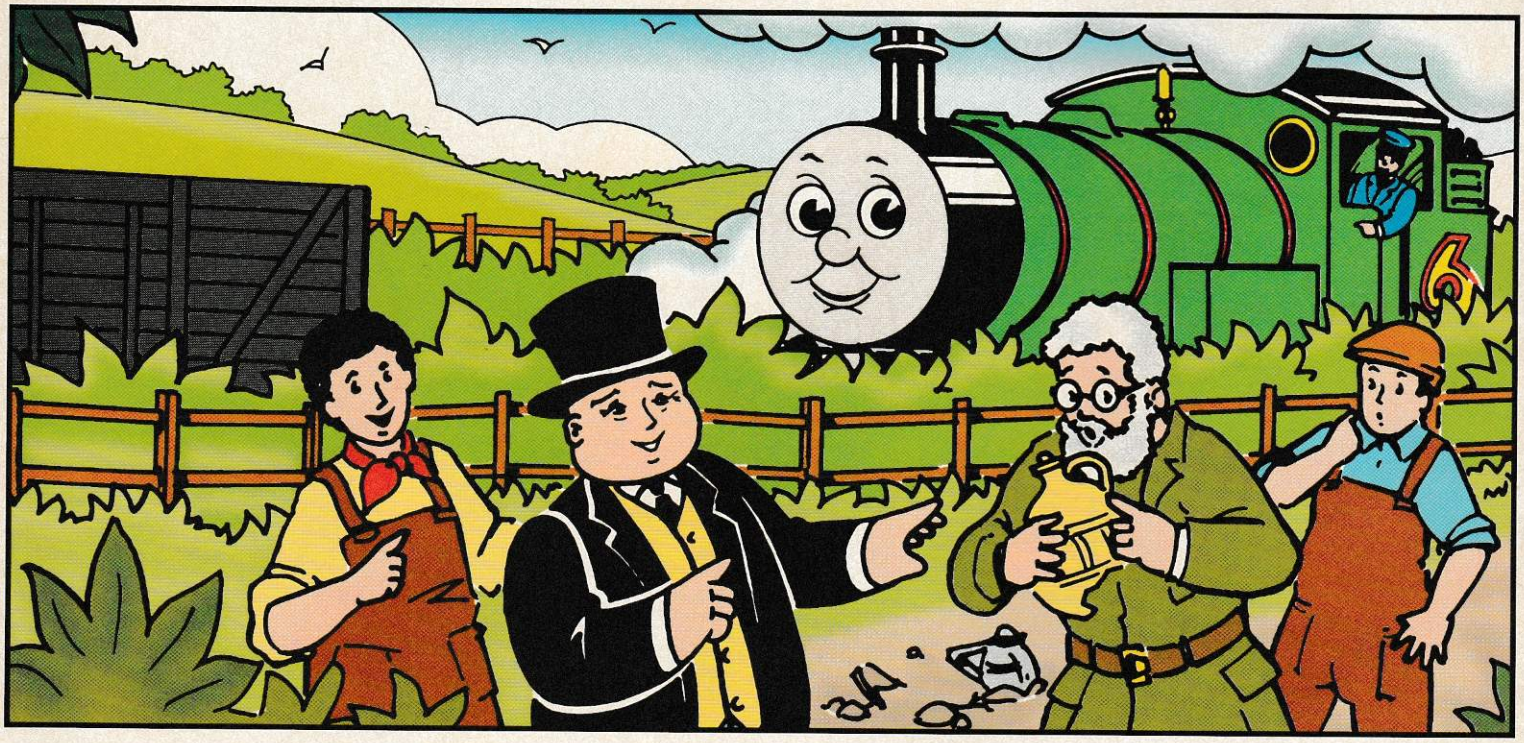
1. Thomas was even busier than usual on his branch line. One morning, he was carrying a works train full of engineers and equipment. The men were going to build a new siding.

2. Terence the Tractor was helping to clear the ground, before any track was laid. The work had only just begun. Then Terence's driver spotted something in the earth.

3. Terence stopped and his driver carefully picked it up. "It's a vase," he said. "It looks very old. It must have been buried for ages!" The other men agreed with him.



4. Thomas saw Terence had also dug up some other things. There was more ancient pottery and glassware, tiles and even a few coins. "Who buried them?" Thomas asked, puzzled.

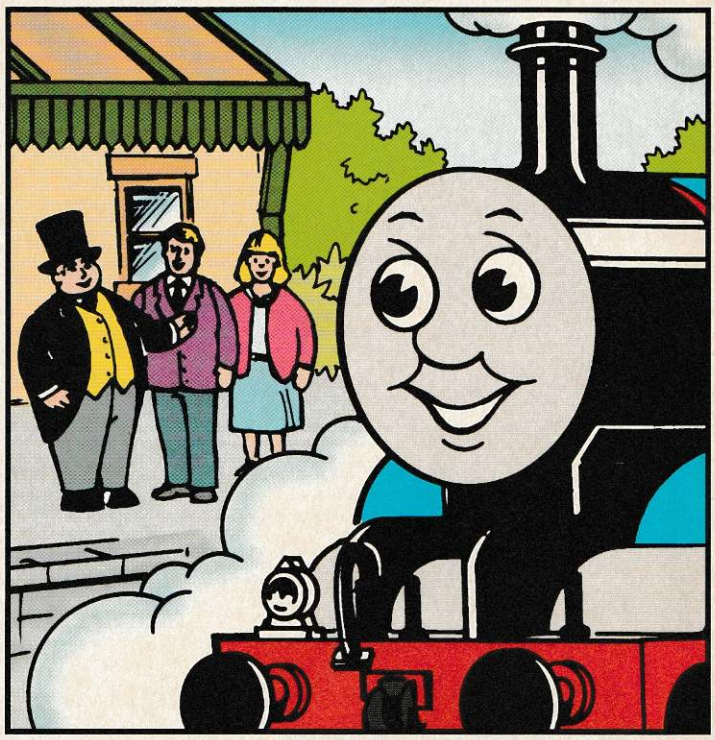


5. "We must find out," replied his driver. The Chief Engineer rang the Fat Controller. Before long, he arrived aboard Percy with an expert from the Island of Sodor Museum.

6. "These are very important Roman relics," he said, excitedly. "There may be more!" So the Fat Controller stopped his men working, to let other experts dig up the whole area.

7. Daisy proudly helped Thomas carry the experts, called archaeologists, to and from the site. Thomas' driver told him that people called Romans had lived a long time ago.

8. Over the next few weeks, the remains of a Roman villa, were discovered. The news spread right across Sodor. The site would be opened for everyone to see.



9. The Fat Controller agreed to put the railway siding farther along Thomas' branch line. His men also began to build a station for people who wanted to visit the Roman remains.

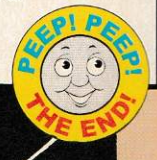
10. One morning, Thomas overheard two teachers talking to the Fat Controller. “We want to take a party of schoolchildren to the opening of the Roman site," they explained.

11. Thomas was given the job. He felt Really Useful. So did his faithful carriages, Annie and Clarabel. On the special day, the children arrived early at the Main Station.

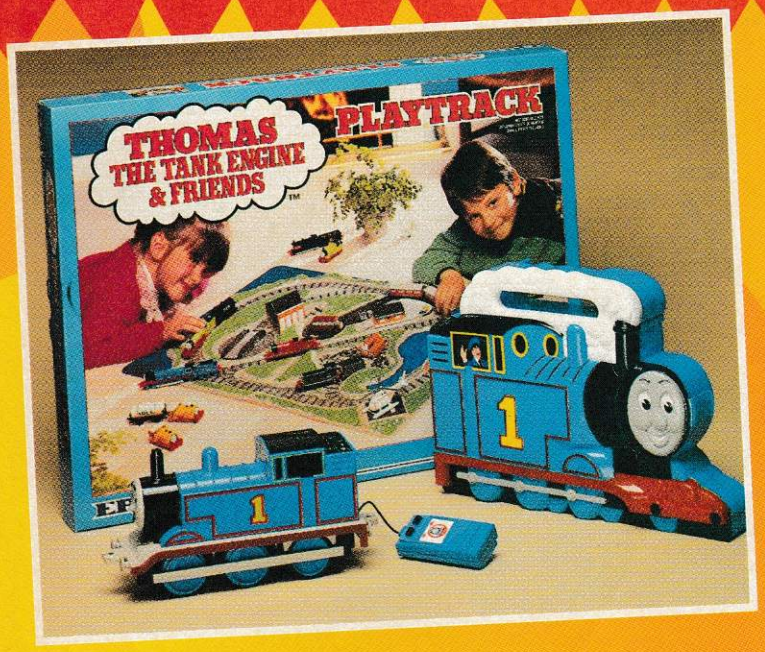
12. Thomas could hardly believe his eyes. They all wore strange clothes. So did their schoolteachers. “We’ve all dressed up to look like Romans!" they told the Fat Controller.

13. "What a good idea!" said Thomas. One teacher pretended to be a Roman soldier. At the site, there was a big crowd. The children made notes to help them learn about the Romans.

14. Thomas enjoyed himself, too. It was a day to remember. He had his photograph taken with the children. "I've never given any Romans a train ride before," he laughed.

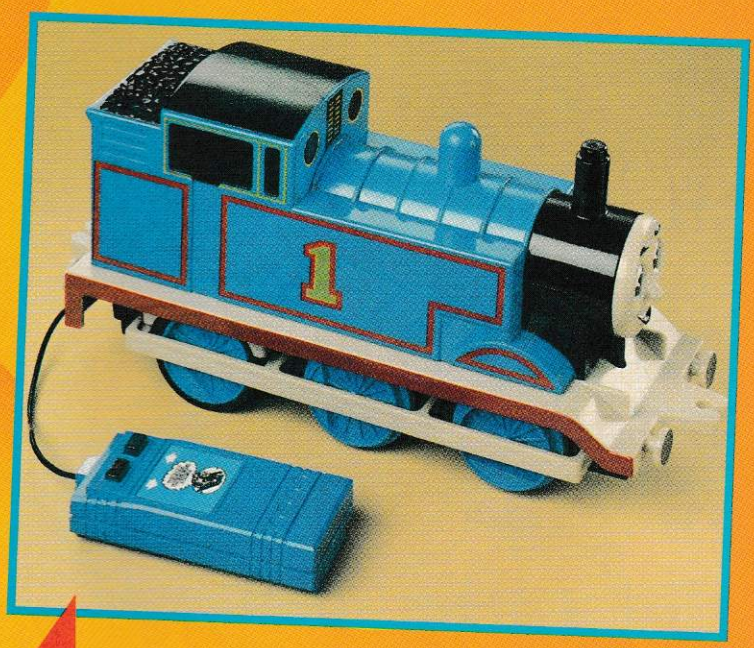


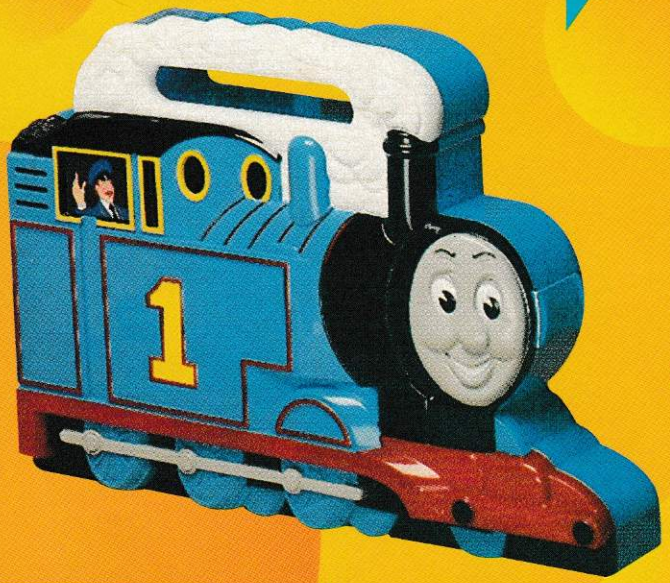
COMPETITION!



Would you like to win some brilliant Thomas prizes from Ertl? The winner will receive a fun playtrack, a remote control and a Thomas carry case!

6 second prize winners will each receive a remote control Thomas!





Finally, 12 runners-up will receive a carry case!

For your chance to win, just answer this easy question:

Who is Oliver's brake van?

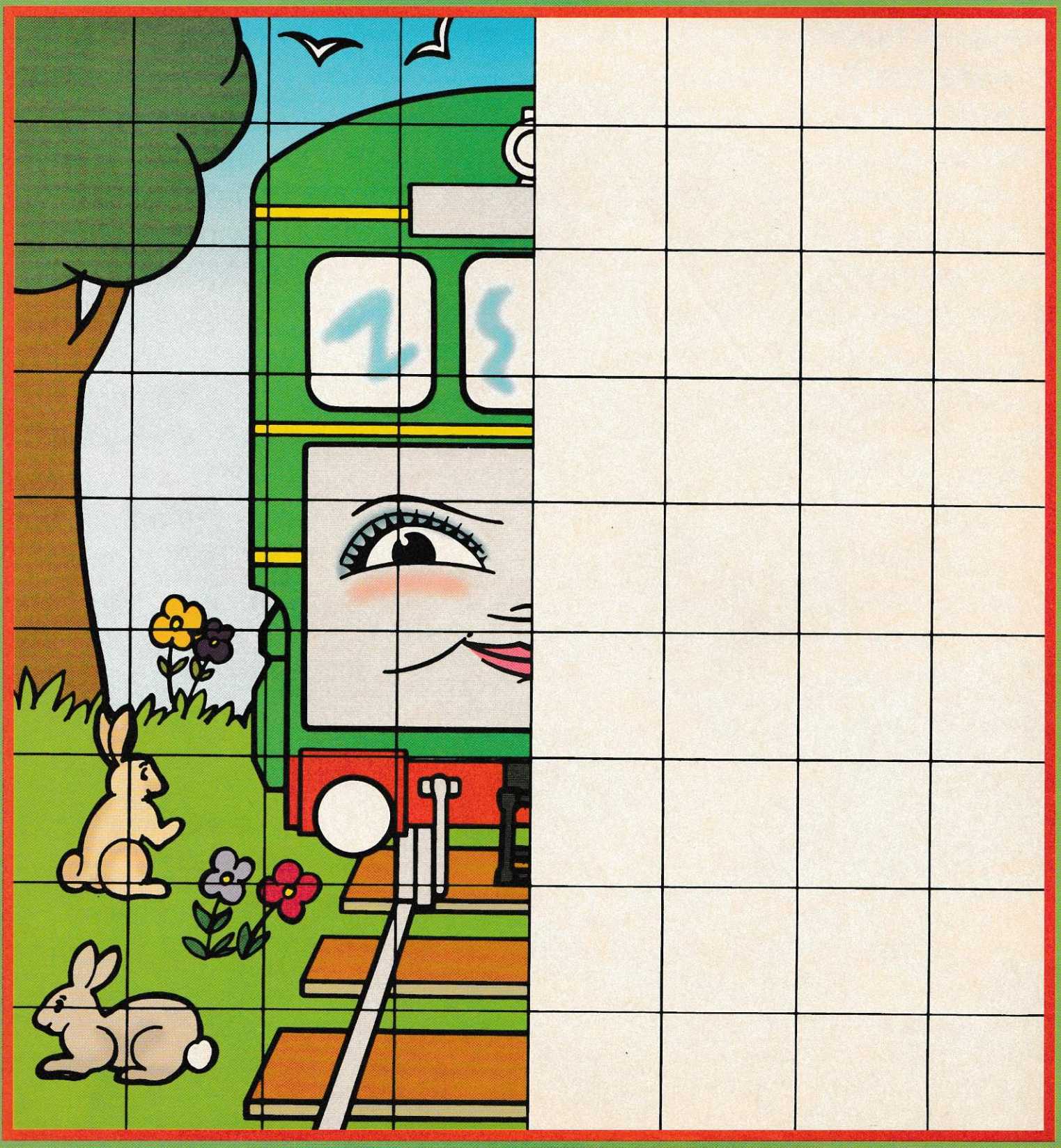
ERTL®

Put your answer on a postcard, including your name and address, and send it to; Ertl Competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ. All entries must be received by 30th August 1996.

This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prizes lost or damaged in the post. The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence shall be entered into.

Draw Daisy!

Use the squares to help you draw the rest of Daisy. When you've finished, complete the picture by colouring it in!

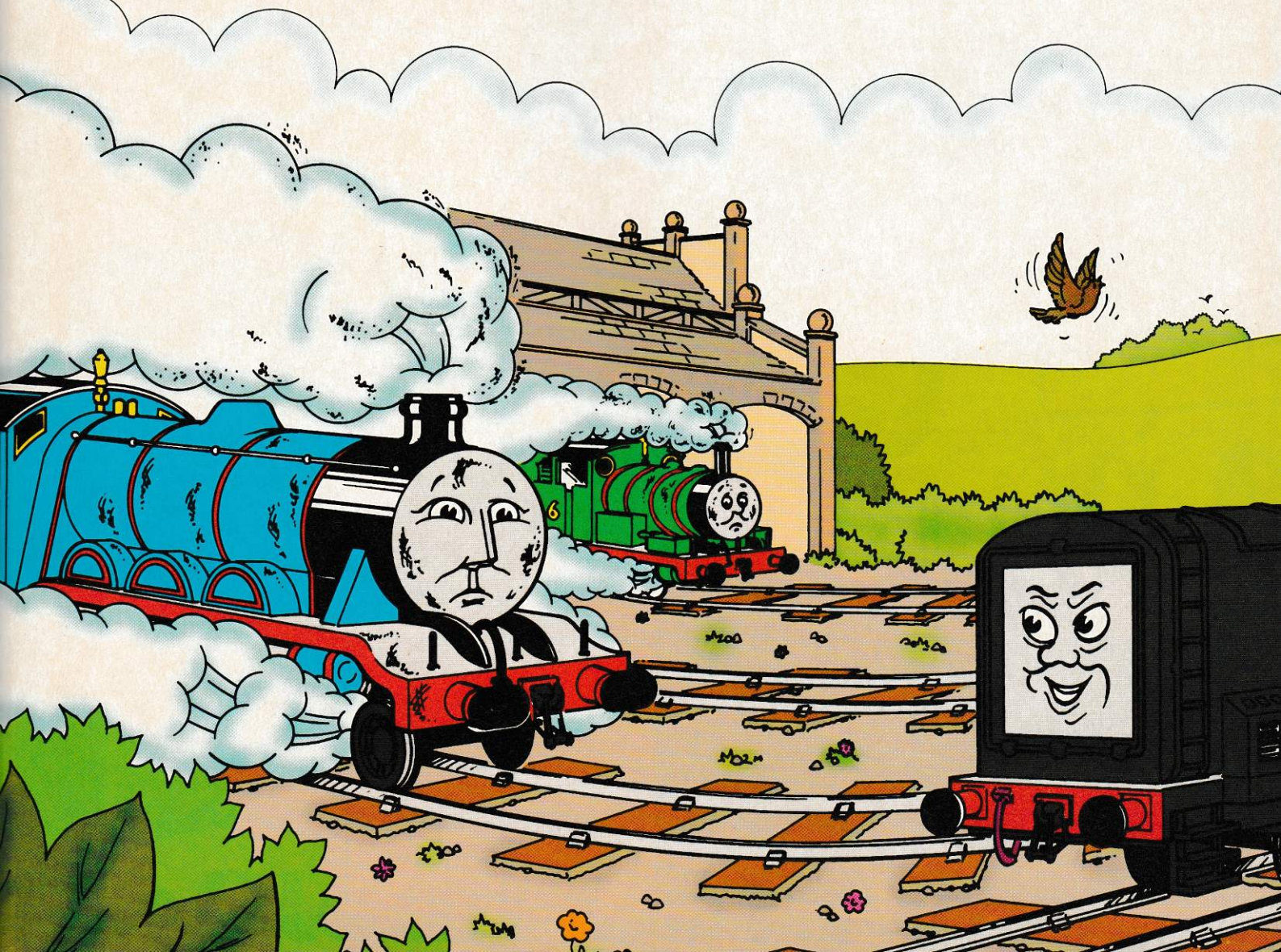


Clean Getaway!

Diesel was really enjoying himself. He was teasing the steam engines because they were not running properly. They coughed and spluttered amid clouds of sooty smoke as they strained to get up steam.

"It's not our fault," protested Percy while Diesel stood laughing nastily at him in the Main Station yard. "We've been given bad coal." "Serves you right!" hissed Diesel. "If you were a modern engine, like me, you wouldn't need dirty coal. You'd run smoothly on diesel oil. It's so much cleaner!"

Next moment, Gordon limped back with the Express. "I'm late!" he fumed. "This poor coal has slowed me down." "Pah! Excuses!" called Diesel in his



oily voice. "You're just getting old, Gordon! I'm a Really Useful Engine not a really slow and smoky one!"

The steam-engine drivers complained about the coal to the Fat Controller. "All our engines will fall behind schedule unless they get better coal," they told him. The Fat Controller was worried. "Leave it to me," he said. "I must have an efficient railway!"

Meanwhile, Thomas was pulling a goods train on his branch line. The bad coal in his firebox would not burn properly. Thomas huffed and puffed but he could not get up a slope in the track. Diesel was sent to give him a pull. "Don't burst your boiler," said Diesel. "I'll take the strain for you!"

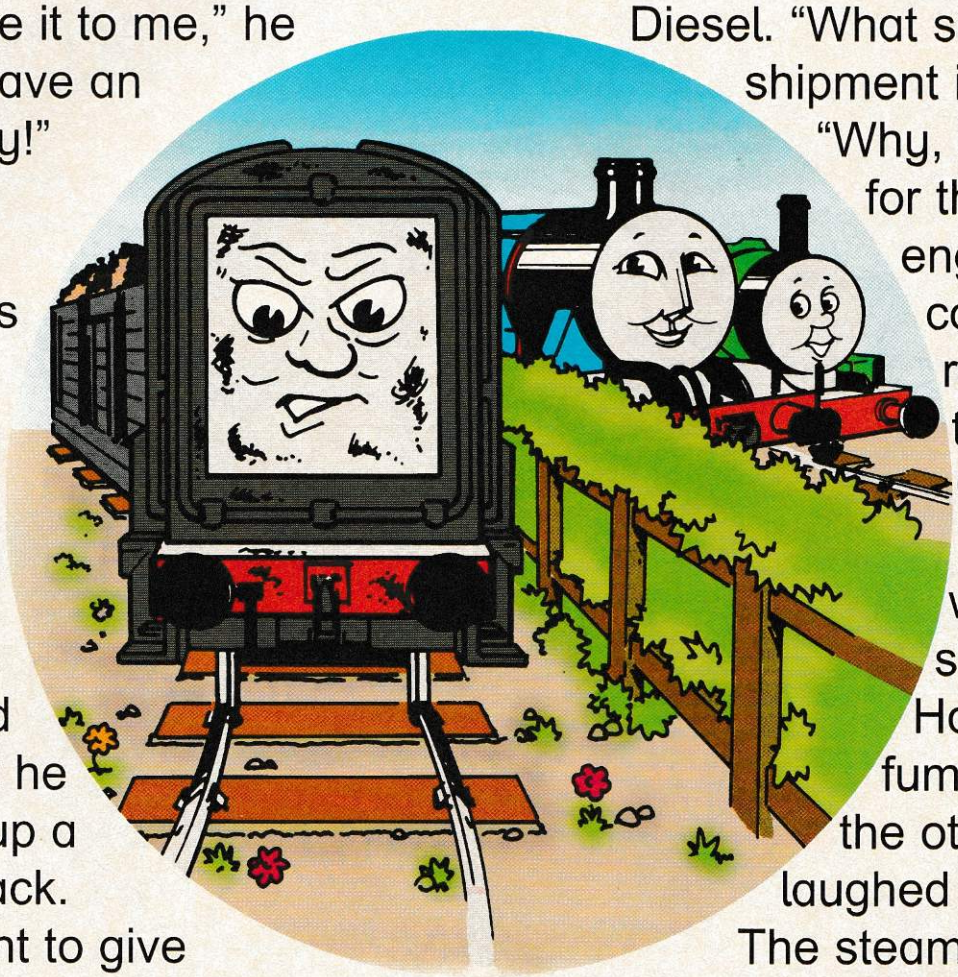
He soon brought Thomas and his trucks back to the Main Station to join the other steam engines. "What a sorry-looking lot you are!" mocked Diesel.

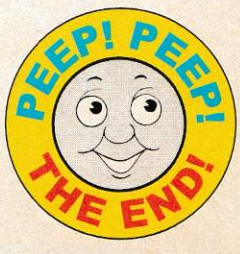
Then the Fat Controller hurried out of his office to see him. "I've an urgent job for you, Diesel," he said. "It'll be done before you can say 'slow steam engines'!" boasted Diesel. The steam engines were listening sulkily, nearby. "I've arranged for a special shipment to be collected from the Big Harbour," the Fat Controller went on. "It sounds very important," bragged Diesel. "What sort of shipment is it?"

"Why, new coal for the steam engines, of course," replied the Fat Controller.

Diesel was shocked. How he fumed as all the others laughed at him.

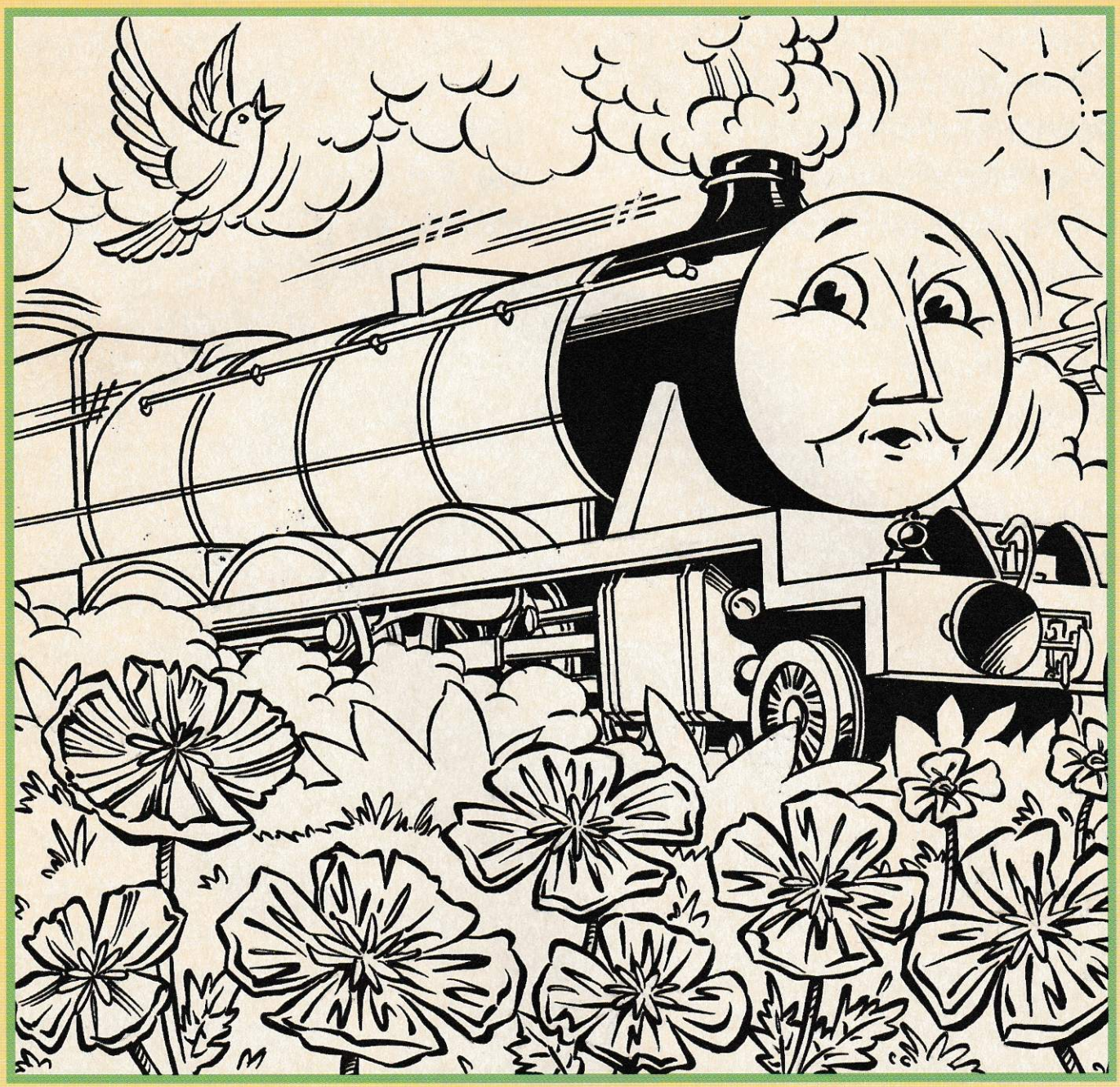
The steam-engines chuckled all the more when Diesel returned with their coal. He was covered in coal dust and had to be washed down. Thomas and the others soon steamed happily past him, burning their new coal. "Thanks, Diesel!" they called. "Now we'll make a fast, clean getaway!"





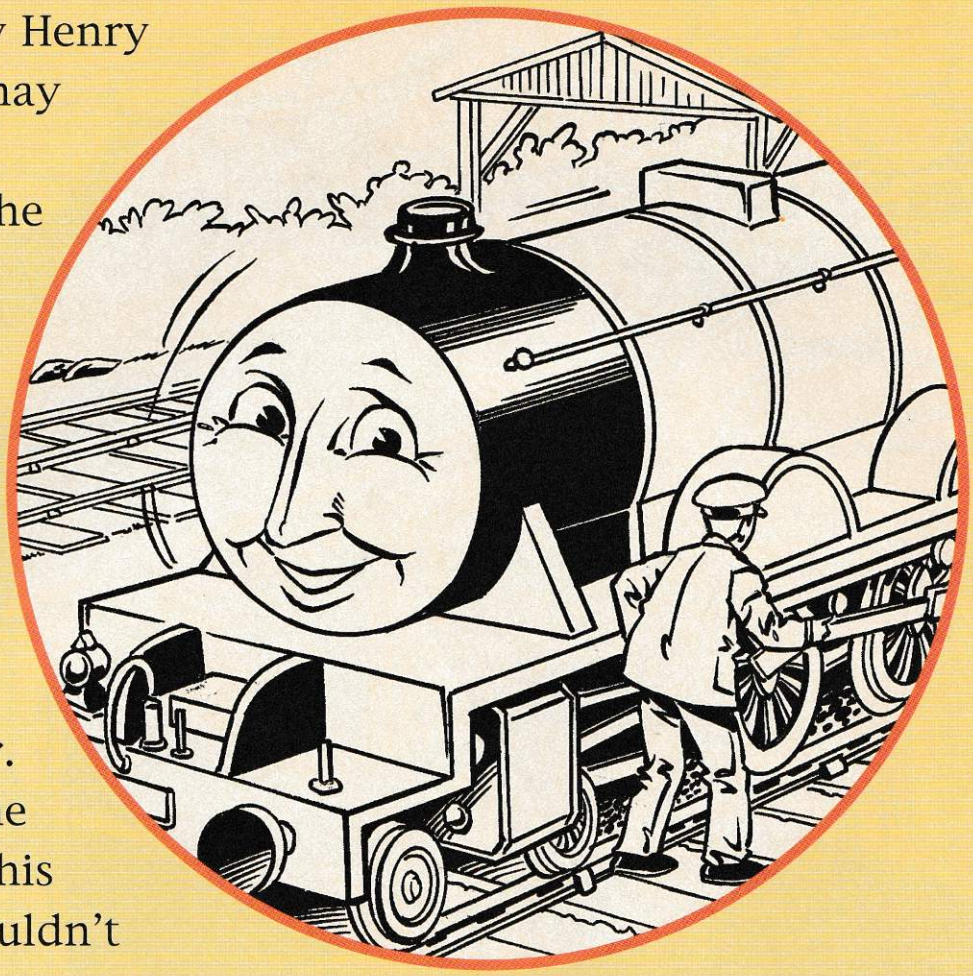
A read & colour story

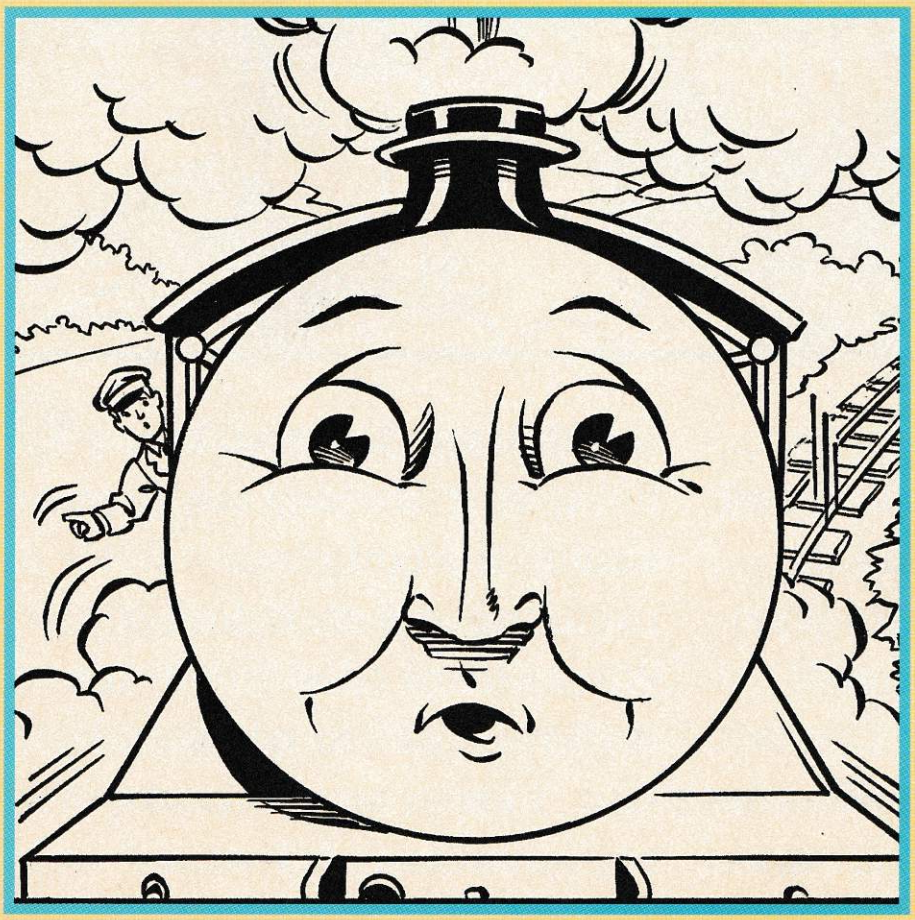
Poorly Henry!



1 One bright sunny morning Henry woke up and sneezed. He had heard that flowers can make people get an illness called hay fever, so he decided that was what he had. He told the Fat Controller that he couldn't possibly go on any branch lines which went near flowers. The Fat Controller said that engines don't get hay fever and sent him out to work. Every time he passed a field with poppies growing in it, Henry complained to his driver that he felt ill.

2 The next day Henry decided that his hay fever was much better. But when he rolled out of the engine shed he said that his wheels were aching. "Please, Sir, don't make me go up any hills" he said to the Fat Controller. "I'm not well." The fireman checked his wheels, but he couldn't find anything wrong.





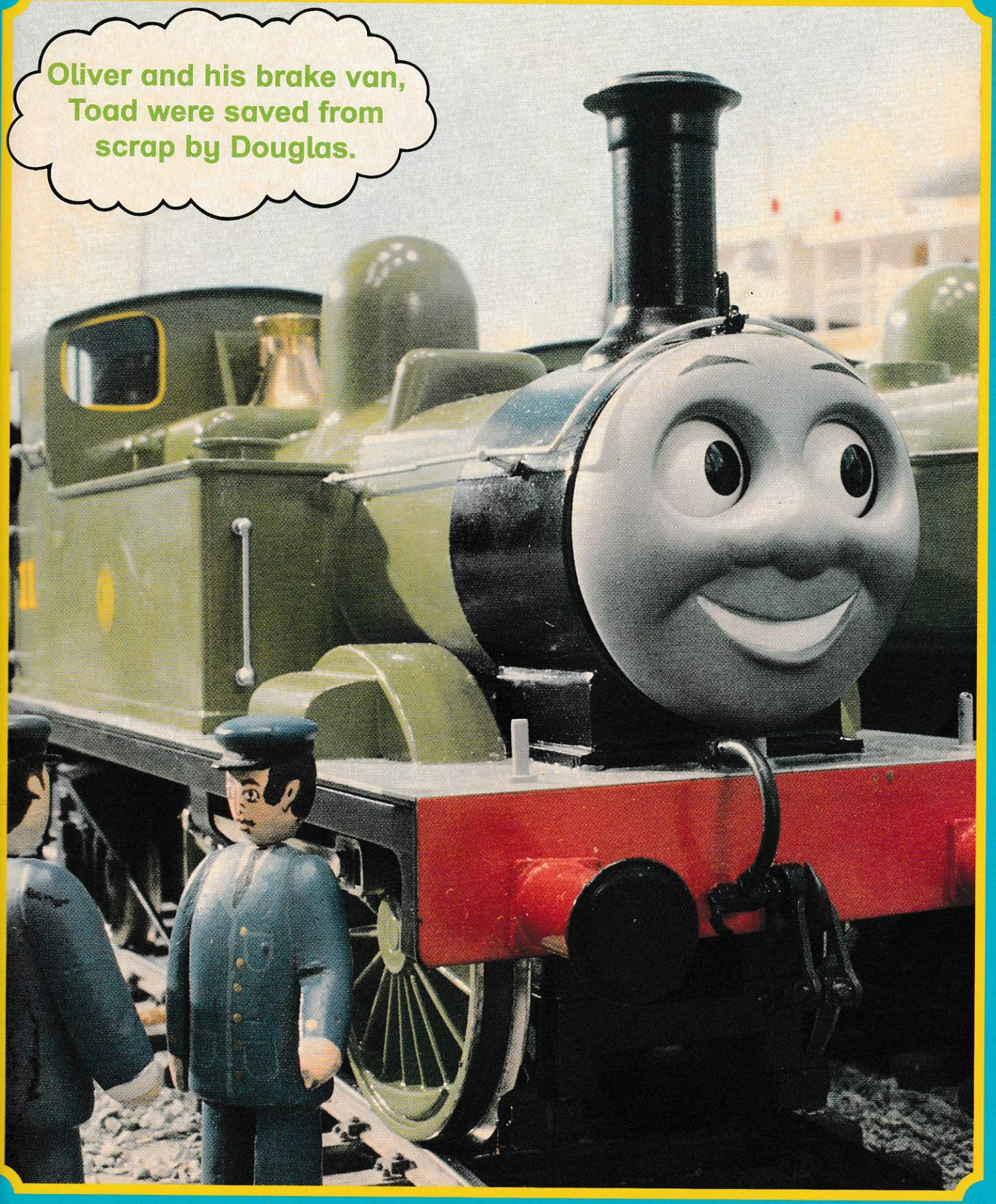
3 The Fat Controller shook his head and sent him out to work. The other engines were beginning to get tired of Henry's moaning. That day, whenever Henry came to a hill he groaned and grumbled to his driver. His driver became very tired of Henry too.

4 Henry had been looking forward to Saturday for a long time. It was his turn to take the Seaside Special. "Are you sure you are well enough?" teased Gordon. Henry said he felt very well, and set off with the holiday makers. Half way through the journey, Henry felt that something really was wrong. His boiler was rumbling and shuddering. When Henry tried to tell his driver, he just laughed and said "I suppose you've got engine measles this time!"

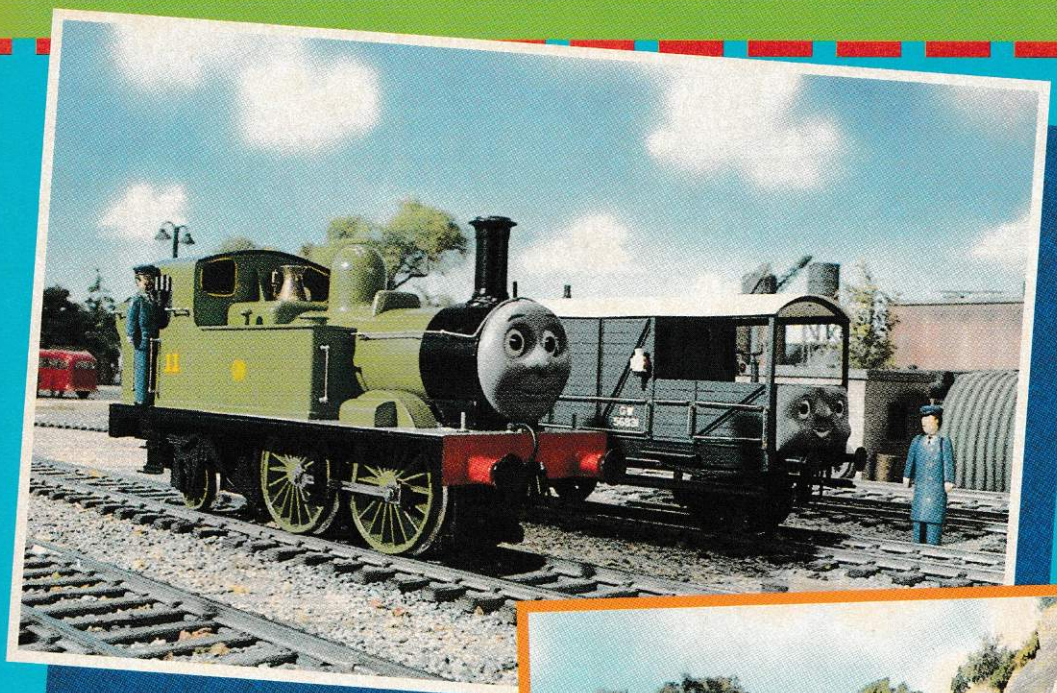
5 It wasn't long before Henry broke down. Gordon was sent to fetch the passengers. Then Diesel arrived with a nasty grin on his face to tow Henry home. Back at the Engine Shed Henry felt very sorry for himself. The Fat Controller came to visit him. "Now Henry," he said. "Perhaps you've learned your lesson. If you moan too much no one will listen to you when it really matters!" "Yes, Sir, sorry, Sir," Henry stuttered. He had indeed learned his lesson.

The end

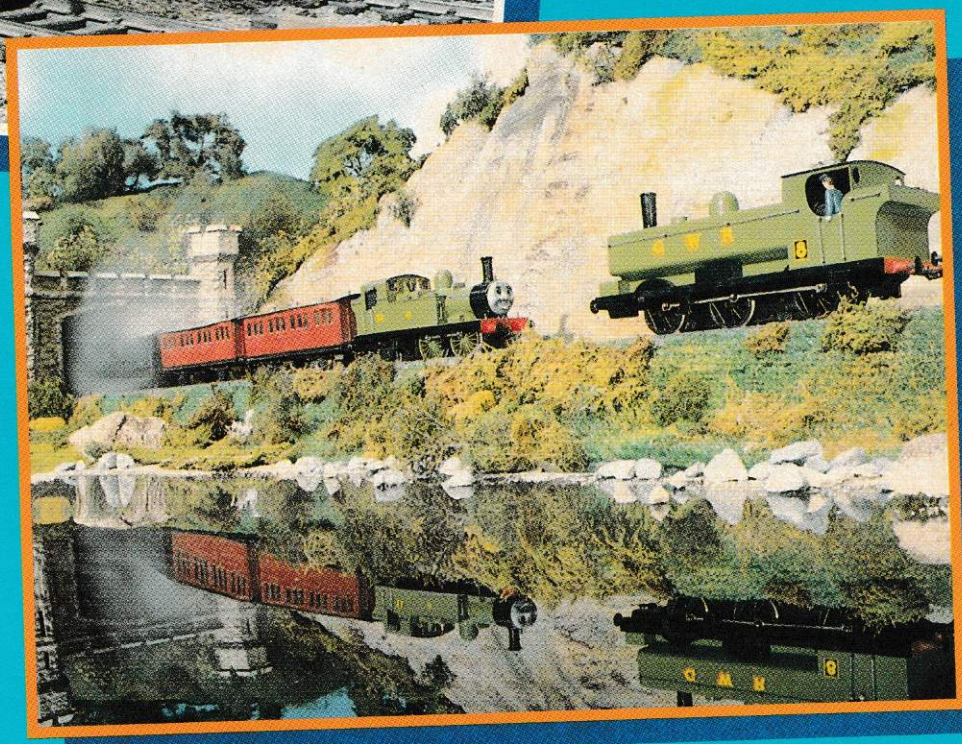
All abou


Oliver and his brake van, Toad were saved from scrap by Douglas.

t Oliver!



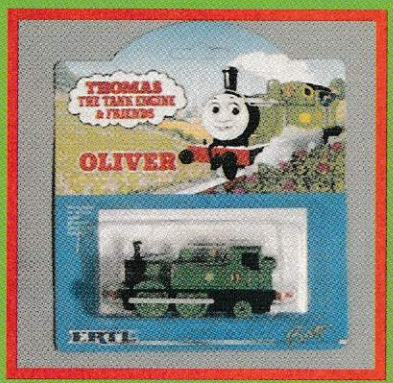
He has a splendid green coat of paint of which he is very proud.



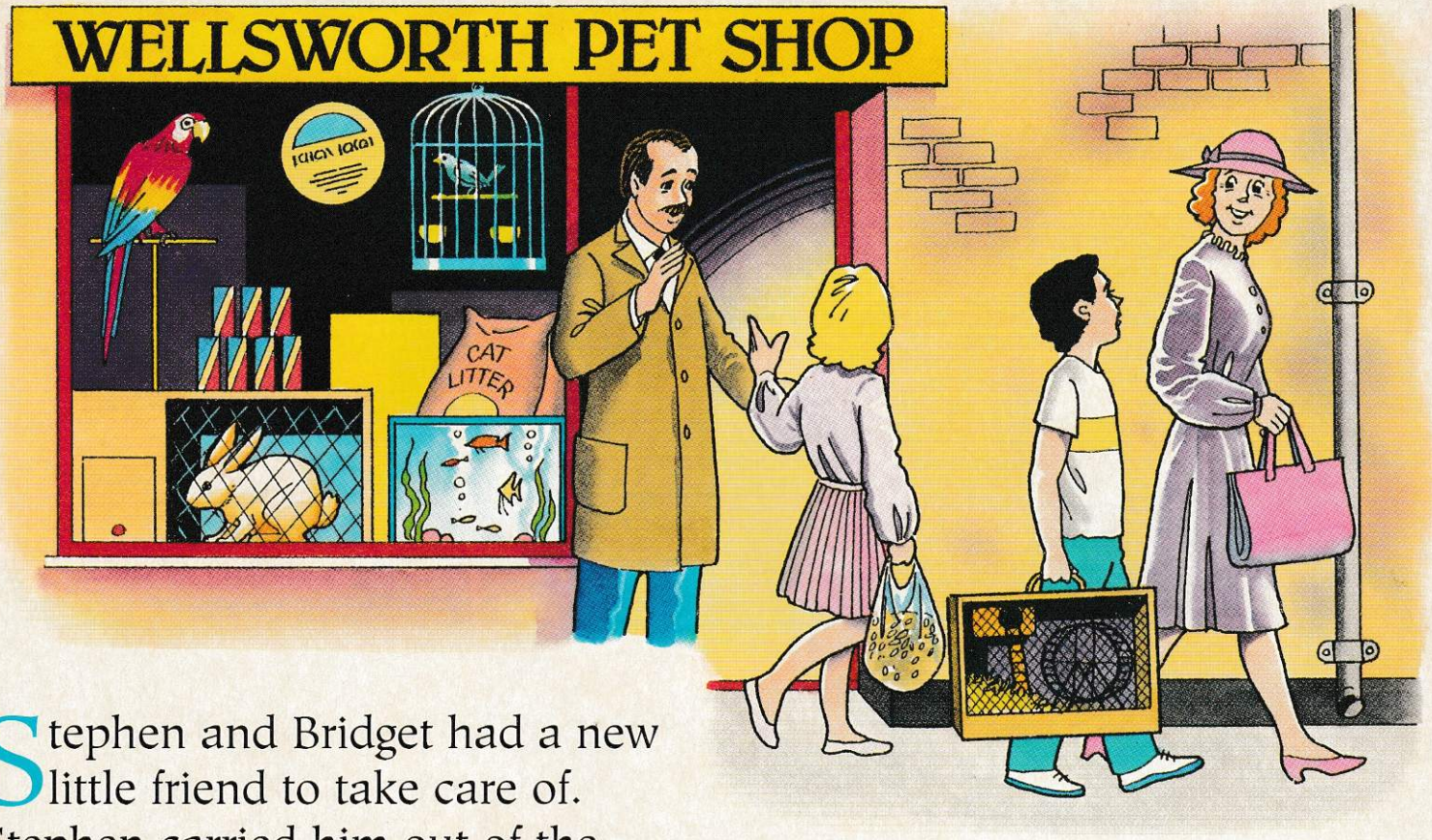
Oliver now works happily on Duck's branch line.

Win a model Oliver!

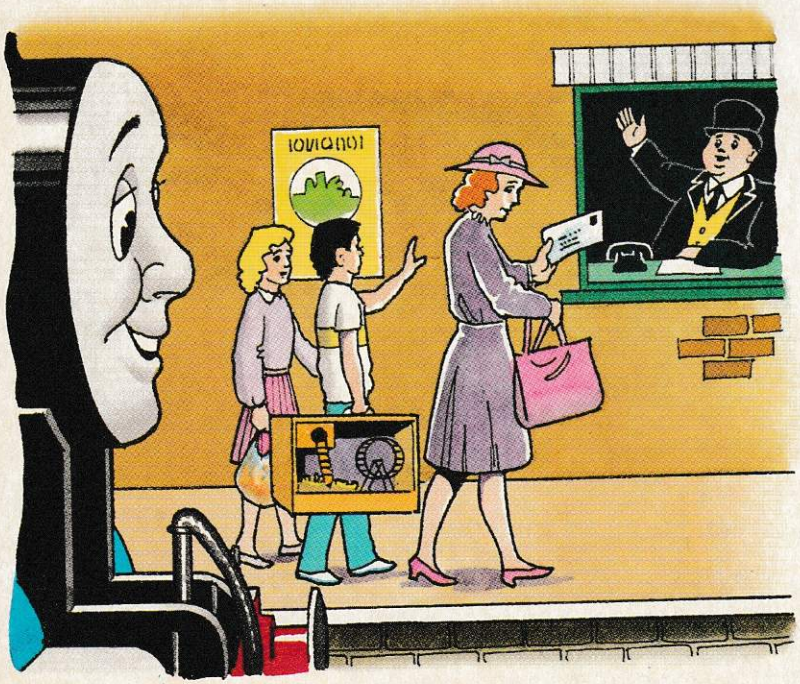
Five lucky winners will win a splendid model Oliver from the ERTL engine range! Just send a post card, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/Oliver model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ. Closing date: August 30th 1996. The first five names out of our postbag after the closing date will win their very own Oliver.



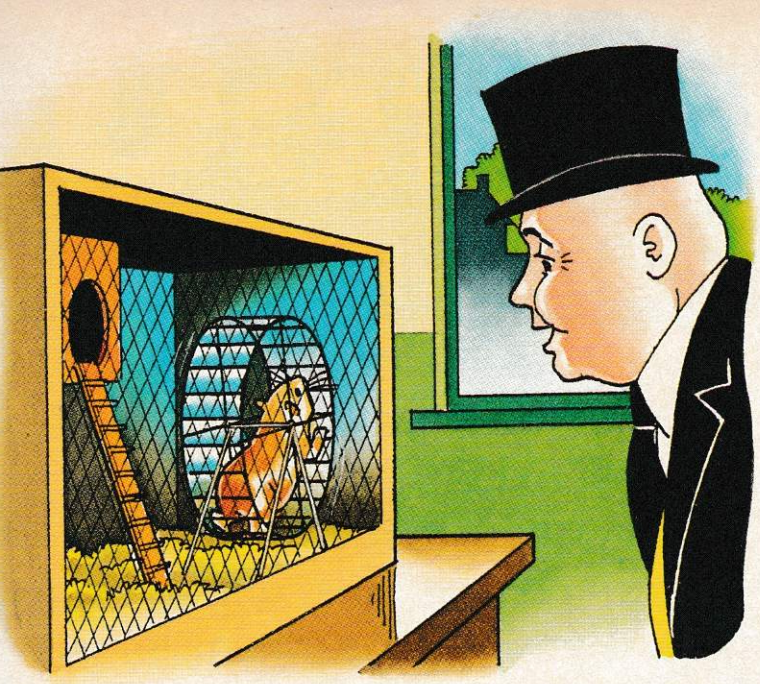
The Hunt for Harry



Stephen and Bridget had a new little friend to take care of. Stephen carried him out of the pet shop in Wellsworth in a special cage. "He's curled up, fast asleep," smiled Bridget. Stephen turned to Lady Hatt, "Thank you for buying him for us, grandma. I"m going to call him Harry," he said. They walked to Wellsworth Station and waited for Thomas to collect them. The little tank engine puffed along as quietly as he could. He promised not to blow his whistle in case the noise frightened his tiny passenger.



When Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt arrived at the Main Station, the Fat Controller waved to them from his office window. "We can't wait to show grandpa our new pet," said Bridget. "You go ahead," added Lady Hatt, taking a letter out of her handbag. "I've forgotten to post this. There's a pillar-box outside the station." The children went into the Fat Controller's office.

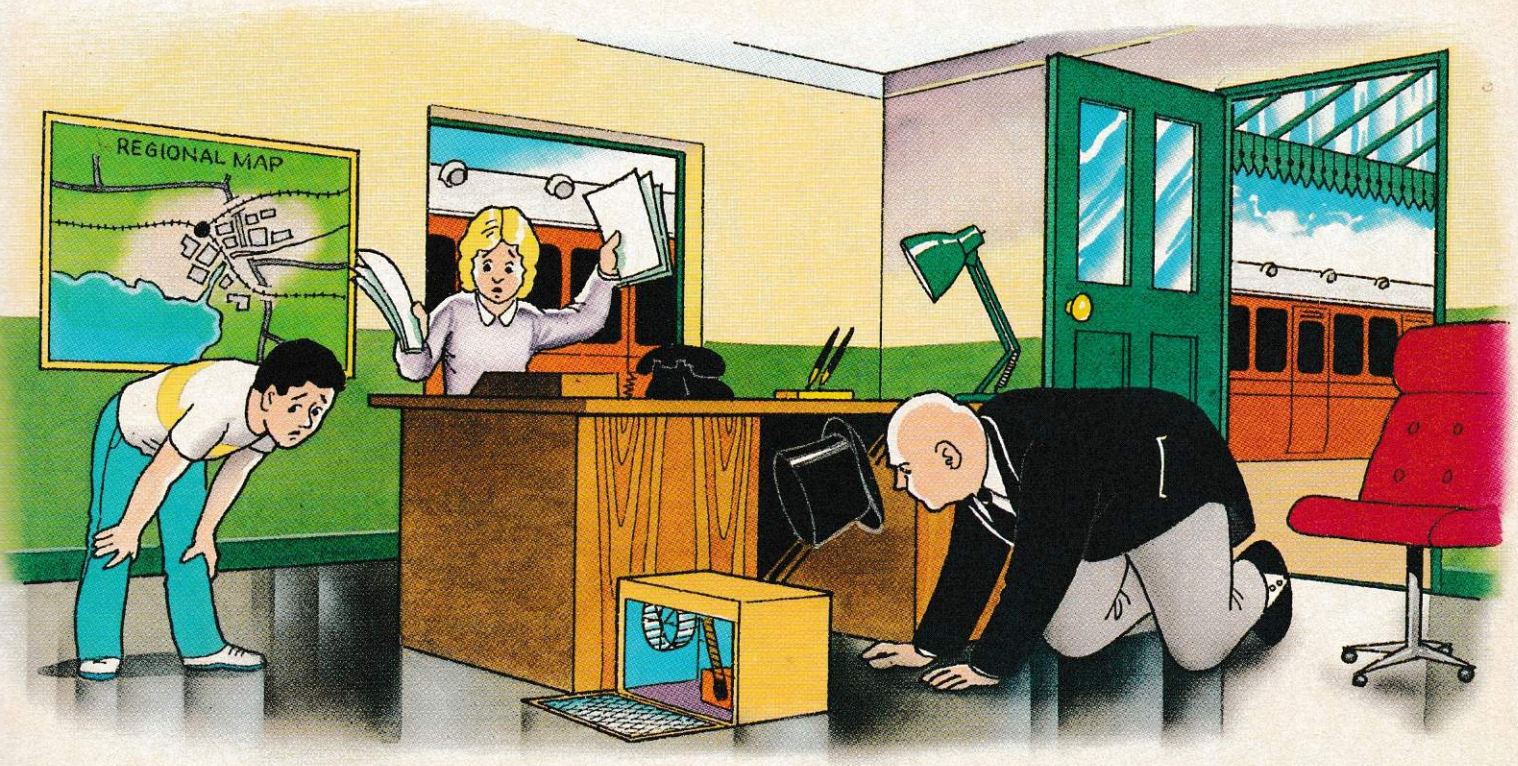


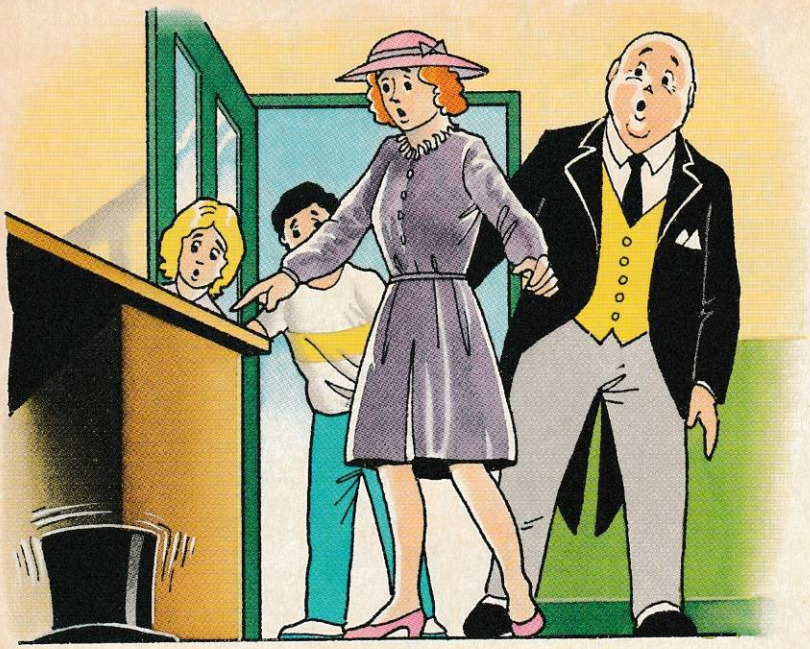
"Look at our new hamster, grandpa!" they said. "He's called Harry." "You must take good care of him," replied the Fat Controller. "Just like I do with all my engines."

Peeping into the cage, the Fat Controller saw the hamster had woken up. He was treading a small wheel which went round and round.

"Now I want to show you both something," the Fat Controller told Stephen and Bridget. They carefully put the cage on the floor by their grandpa's desk. Then they went to look at a big new map of the railway pinned to the wall.

When they turned round again, the children had a shock. The cage door was open and their hamster had gone! "Oh, no!" cried Stephen. "He's escaped!" They started to search for the fluffy little creature. The Fat Controller helped. But as he peered under his desk, his top hat fell off! "There's no sign of our hamster and the door is open," said Bridget, anxiously. "Come on! He must have run outside!"





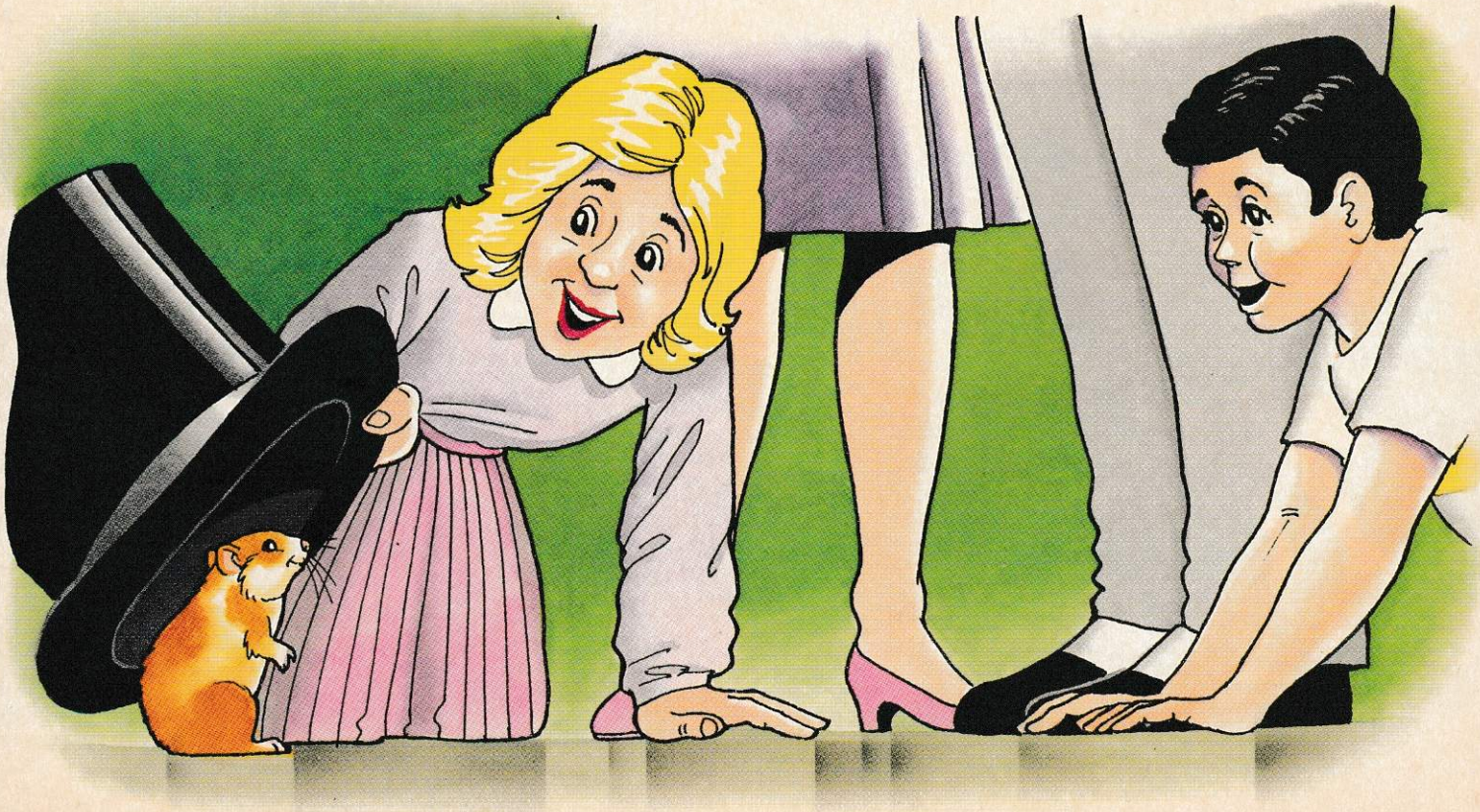
The Fat Controller was so worried he followed his grandchildren out of the office without picking up his top hat.

Moments later, his wife returned. Lady Hatt was puzzled to find the office empty. "Where is everyone?" she said. Just then, she saw something strange and cried out in surprise.

The others heard her and came running back. Lady Hatt pointed to the Fat Controller's top hat. It was gliding across the floor all by itself! Bridget quickly lifted it up. Underneath the hat they found little Harry. As he scampered busily along, he moved the hat, too. Lady Hatt and the others burst out laughing. "So that's where our hamster got to!" said Stephen.

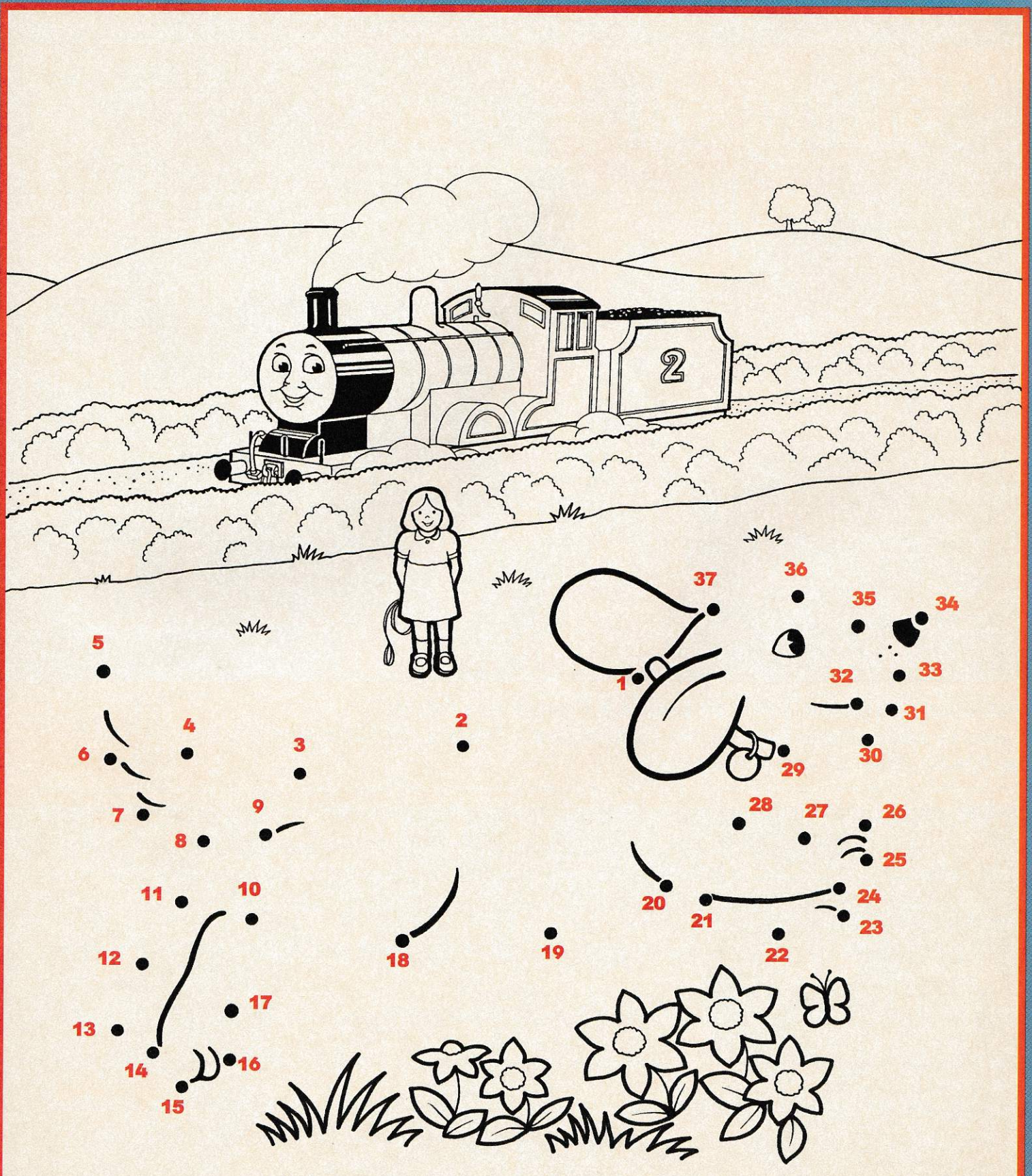
"Well done, grandma! You found our missing pet," added Bridget, explaining what had happened. Lady Hatt smiled. "I thought I'd found a magic hat!" she replied.

THE END



Dot to dot!

Who is Bridget waiting for? Join the dots to see some more!



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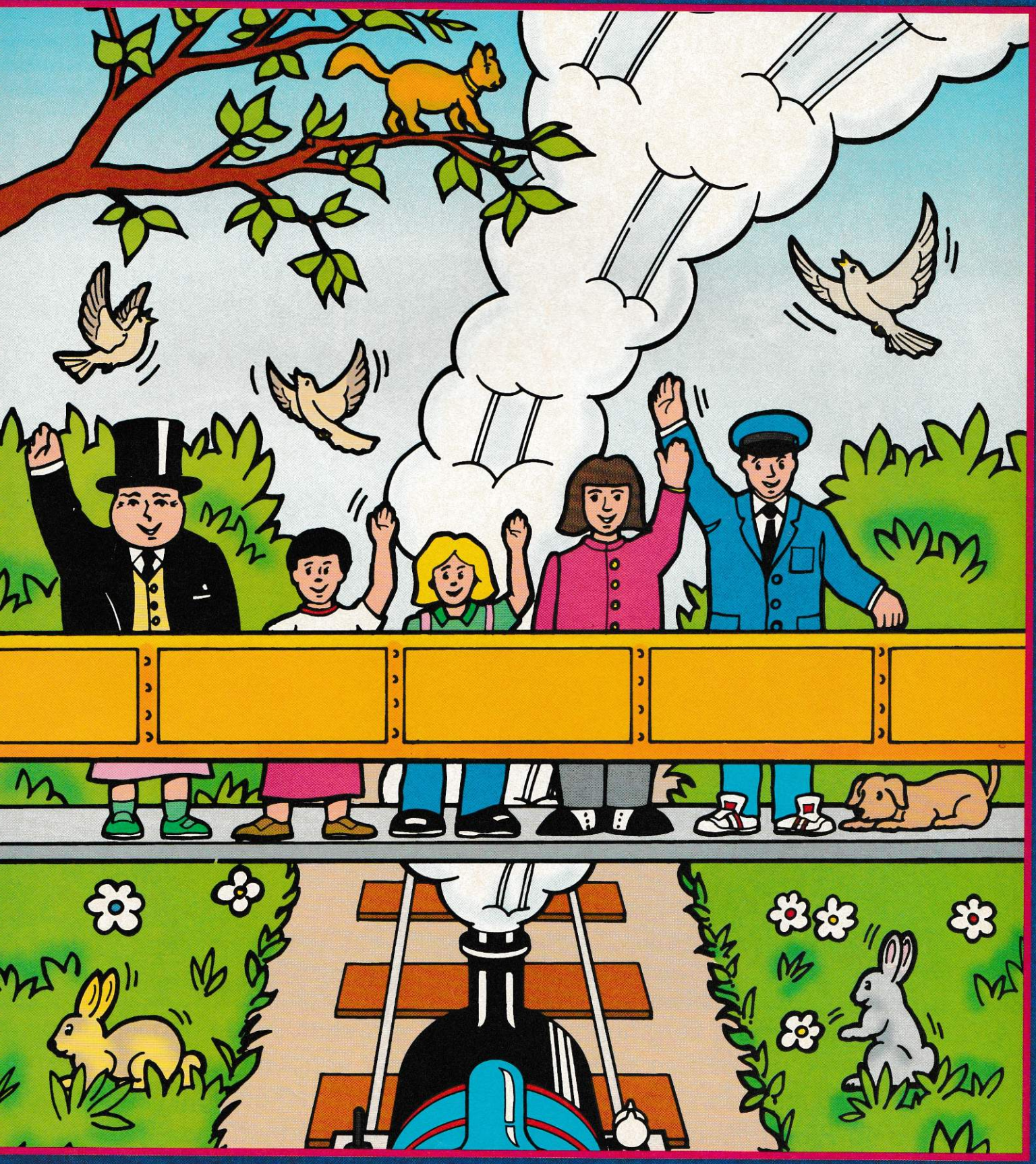
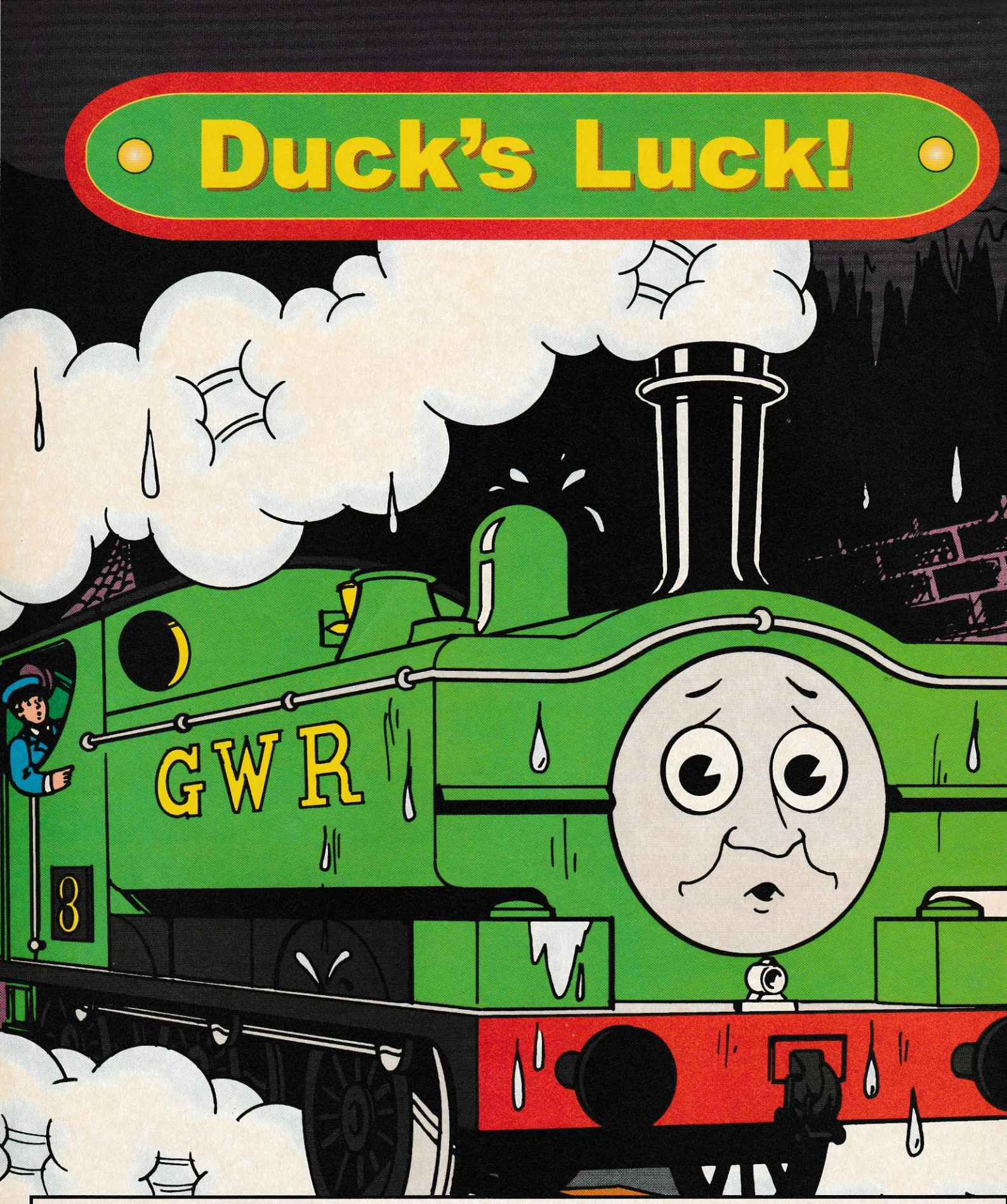
Funny feet!

As Thomas goes under the bridge, he sees a strange sight.
People's tops and bottoms are all muddled up!
Can you draw lines to match their faces to their feet?



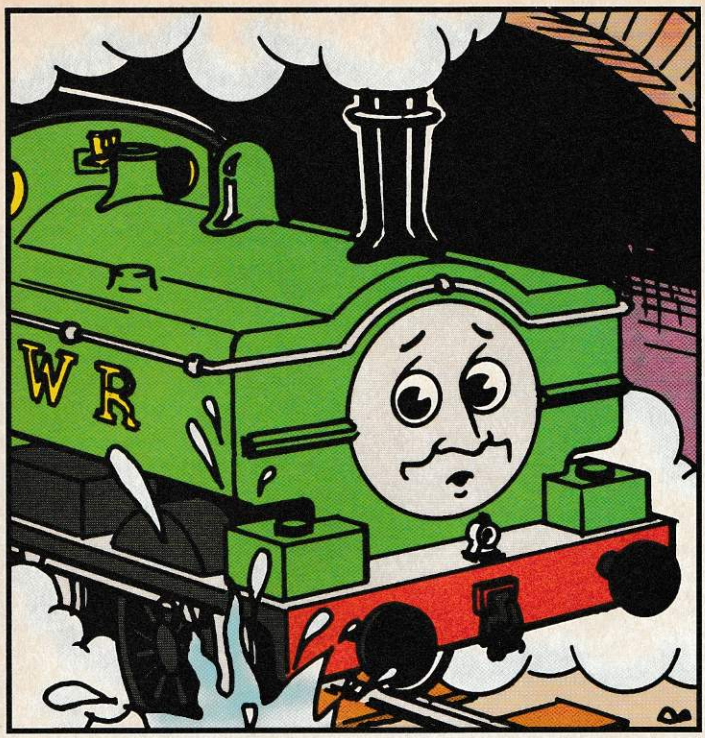
Can you count how many animals are in this picture?

Duck's Luck!

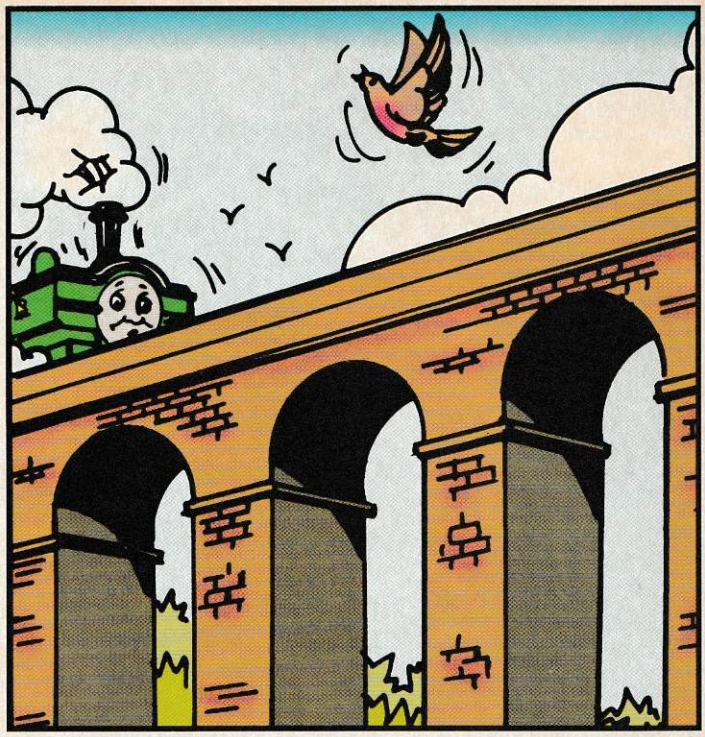


1. Duck was not feeling very happy. He had to take a works train on to a disused line so engineers could repair the track and open it again. Duck entered a long, old tunnel.

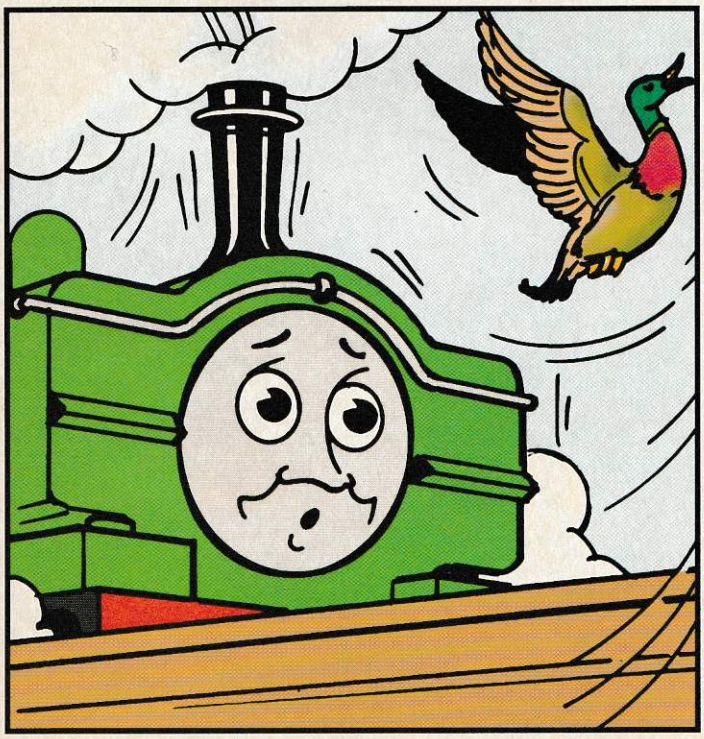
2. It was dark inside and icy drops of water dripped on to Duck. Wispy cobwebs brushed against him. "Just my luck!" groaned Duck. "Why did the Fat Controller choose me?"



3. "Someone had to do it," replied his driver. "You were the only engine he saw in the yard." Next, Duck ran through a puddle. "My wheels are wet now!" he cried.

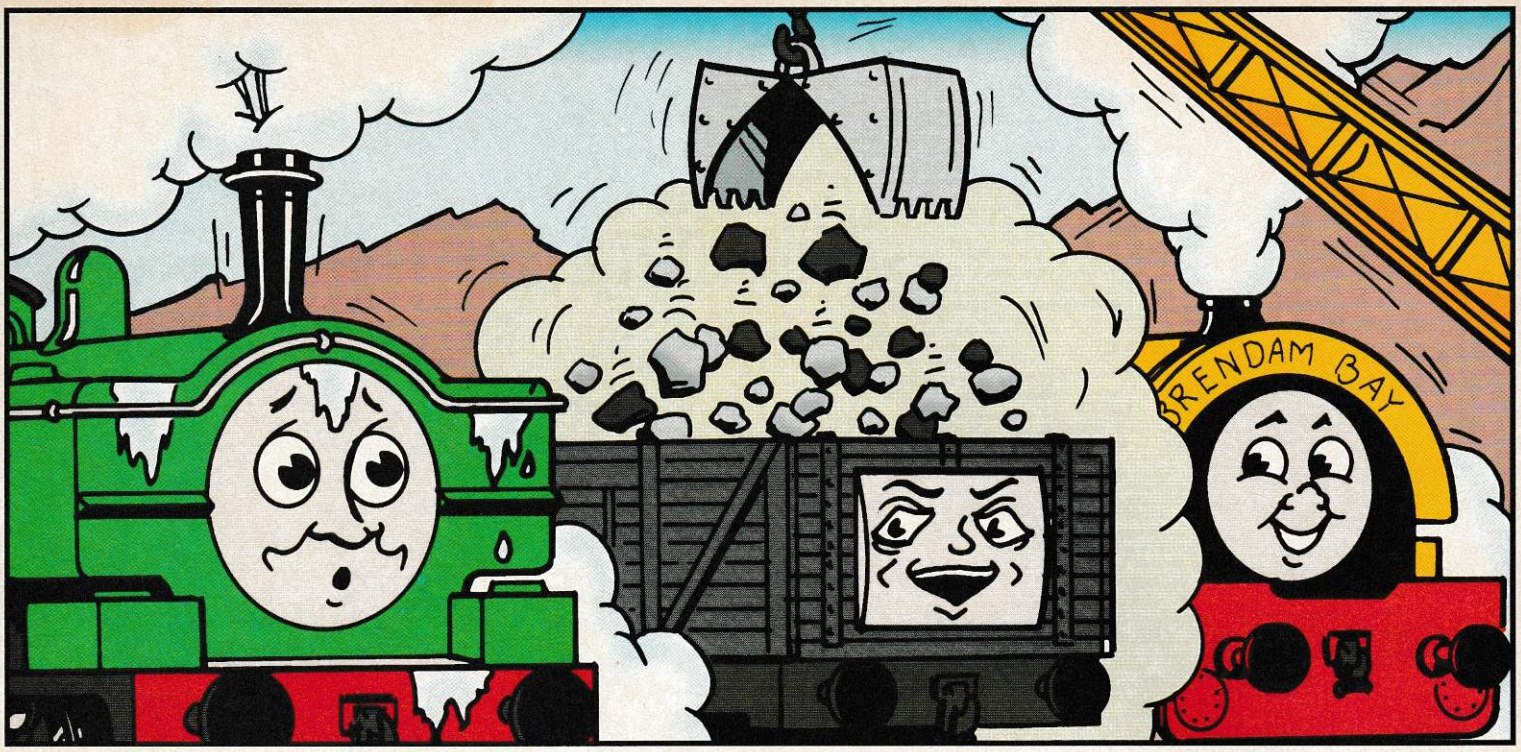


4. The following day, the Fat Controller had another task for Duck. He had to cross a very high viaduct to collect freight from the far side of the Island of Sodor.



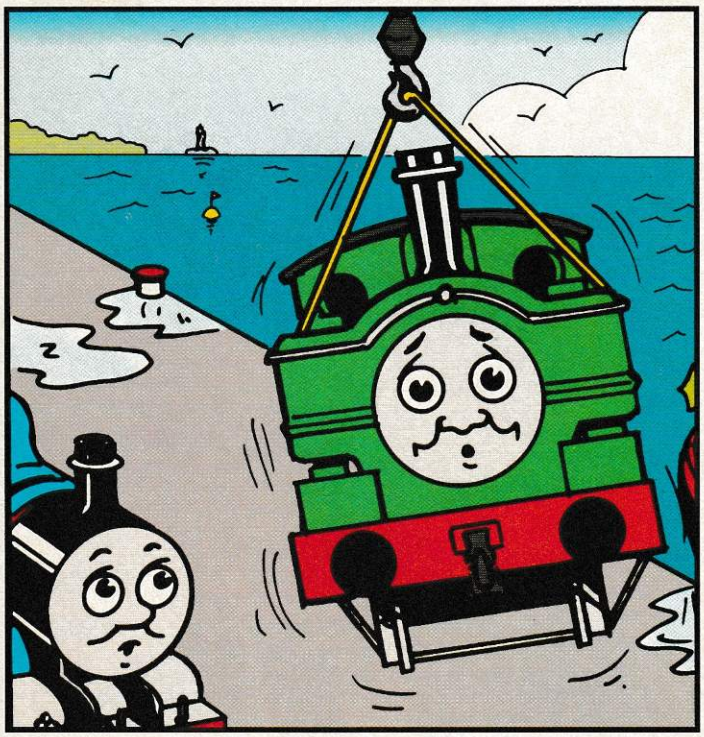
5. Strong gusts of wind tugged at Duck. "It's a long way down from here," he gasped. A real duck flew past him. "I feel as if I'm almost flying too!" said Duck nervously.

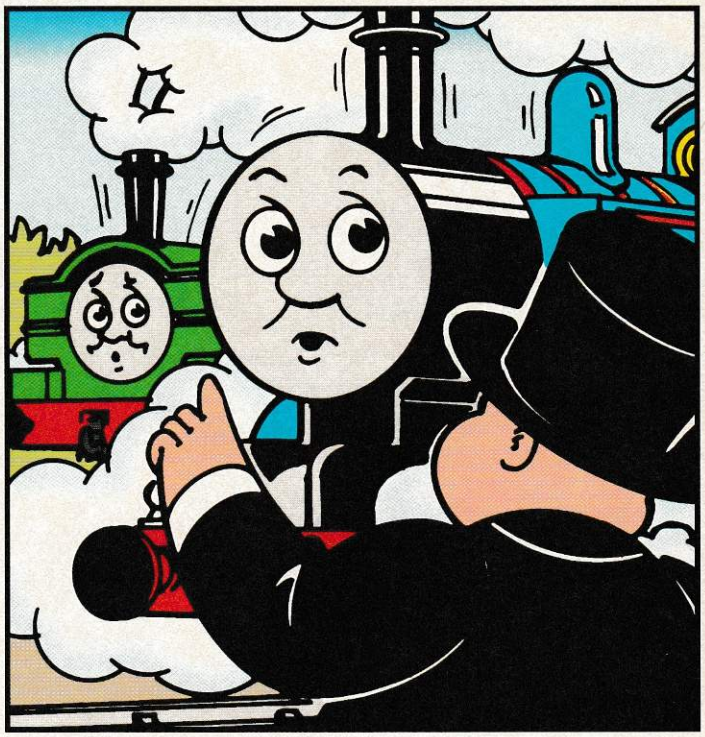
6. At last he returned to the Main Station. "Thank goodness you're back," said the Fat Controller. "Bill's broken down and Ben needs help collecting the china clay."



7. "I'm sorry, Duck, but there's no other engine about," added the Fat Controller. At Brendam Bay, some china clay was spilled near Duck. He was covered in a cloud of dust.

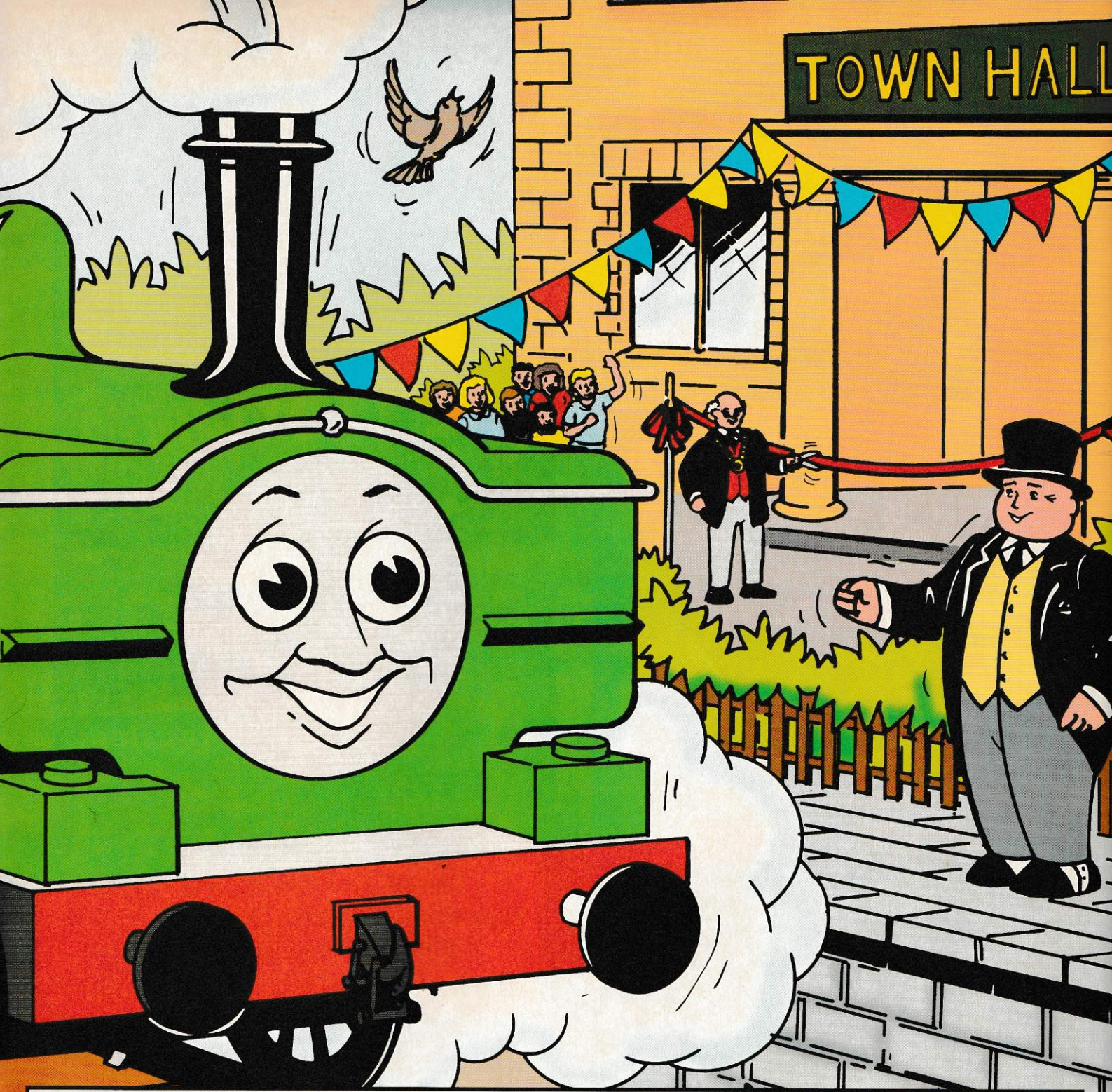
8. "Bad luck, Duck!" teased Ben. Things went from bad to worse for Duck. The mainland railway needed to borrow an engine and the Fat Controller could only spare Duck.





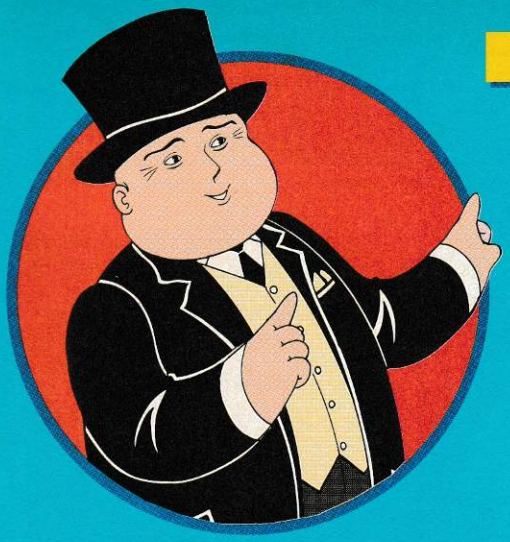
9. The sea crossing was rough both ways. "Duck's luck again!" said Thomas and the others when Duck finally came back. But the Fat Controller had another job for him.

10. "Please, sir," began Thomas. "Could one of us do it instead?" The Fat Controller refused. "It's not fair!" said the other engines. "Duck's had all the nasty jobs!"



11. But Duck was surprised to find himself being given a wash and polish before setting off. Then he was coupled to a splendid new carriage with shiny paintwork and sparkling windows. “I’m as smart as the Express now,” gasped Duck, puzzled. The Fat Controller climbed aboard. “I’ll be coming with you,” he said. “But “where am I going?” asked Duck.

12. He soon found out. Duck was to collect the Mayor and take him to open a new town hall. A big crowd cheered as Duck arrived with the Mayor at the station. The little engine felt very proud. “You deserved a treat,” the Fat Controller told him, afterwards. The other engines thought so too. “Duck’s luck isn’t bad, after all!” they all smiled.



The m

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

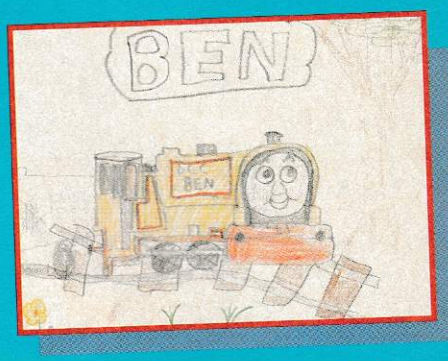
Dear Fat Controller,
My Mum sometimes says I'm naughty. Who is your naughtiest engine?

Love from Katie Grant, age 5.

I think Bill and Ben are my most mischievious engines. I keep an eye on them but the other engines know how to handle their little pranks!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a Thomas remote control model!

A cheeky looking Ben from Jack, age 8.



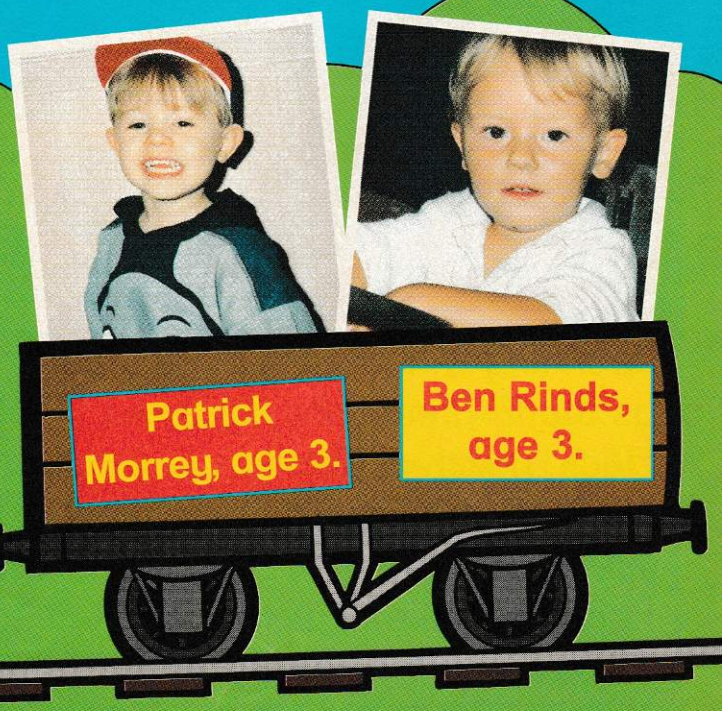
Prize Poem!

Thank you to Helen Ard, aged 7 for this funny poem!

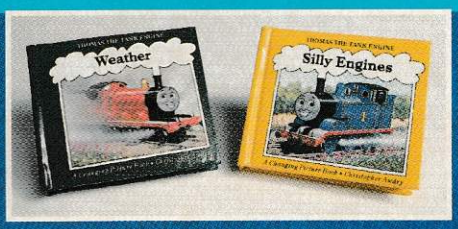
Daisy is a smart green engine,
Sometimes bossy and vain.
And when it comes to pulling trucks,
She will usually complain!

Happy Birthday

To...Matthew Coote, age 3
Stewart McNaughton, Benjamin Hall, age 3 Mark McGhie, age 2
James Irwin, age 7
Rhys Hobbs, age 5.

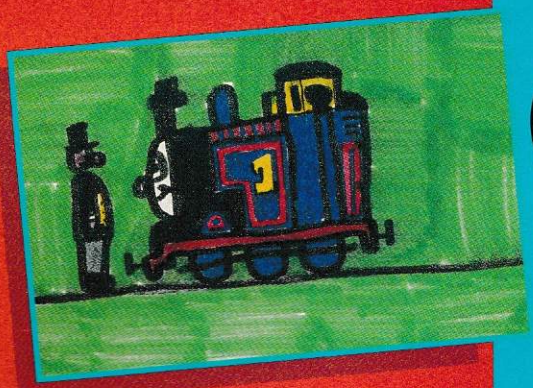


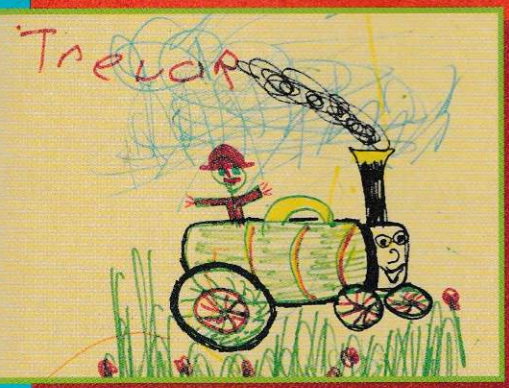
ail train!



Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a special **Thomas Changing Picture Book.**

A splendid picture of Thomas from Robert Davies, age 9.





A happy Trevor with Jem Cole from Liam Holloway, age 2½.

Percy's Jokes

Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy!

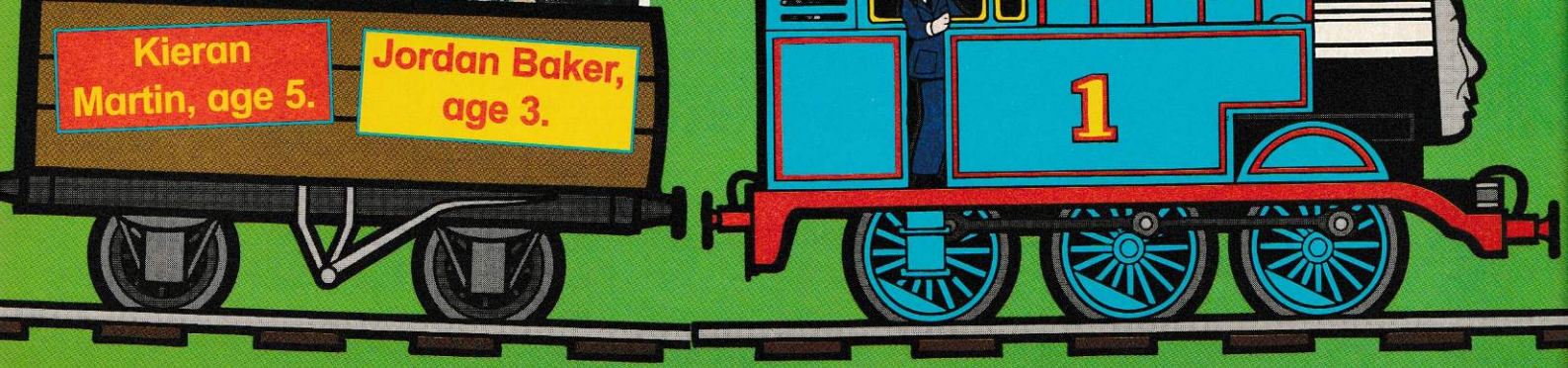
What lies in a pram and wobbles?
A jellybaby!
Daniel Thane, age 5.

Where do frogs get money from?
A river bank!
Gary Greene, age 6.

What is easy to get into but hard to get out of?
Trouble!
James Anders, age 5.

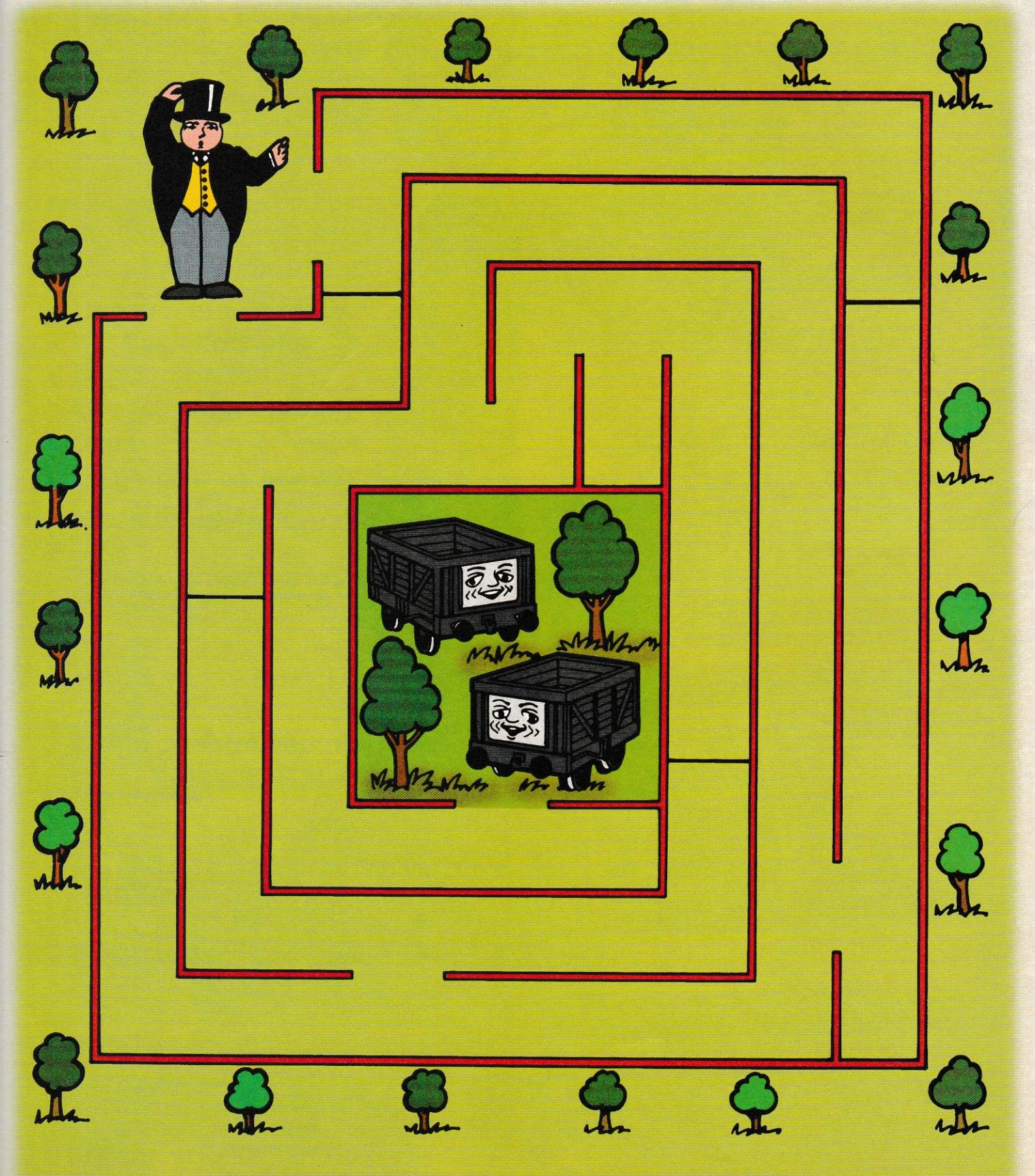
Kieran Martin, age 5.

Jordan Baker, age 3.



Truck maze!

Those troublesome trucks are causing mischief again! They are hiding from the Fat Controller. Follow the maze and help the Fat Controller to find them!



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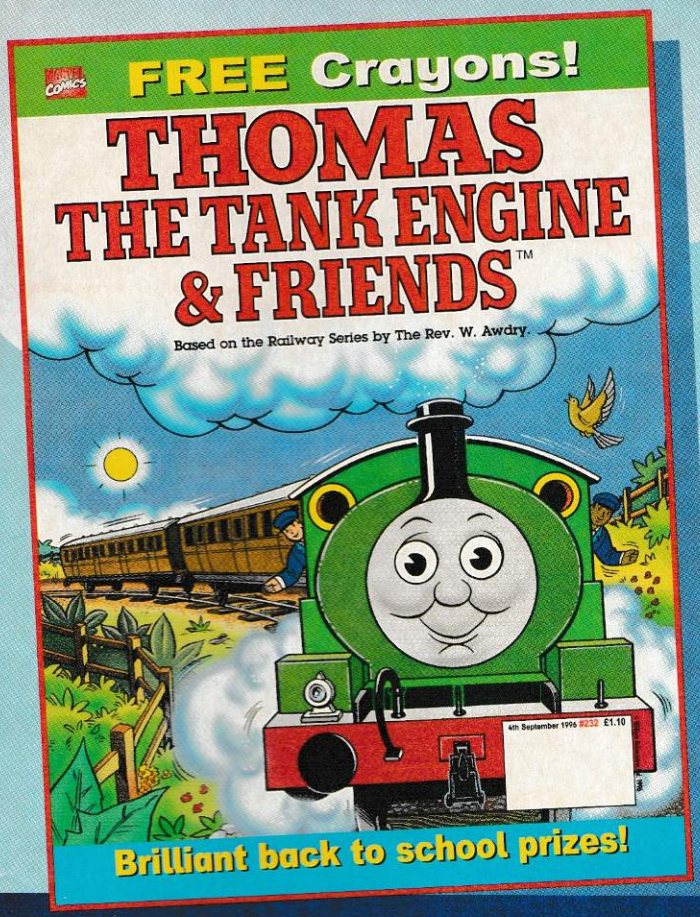

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Thank you

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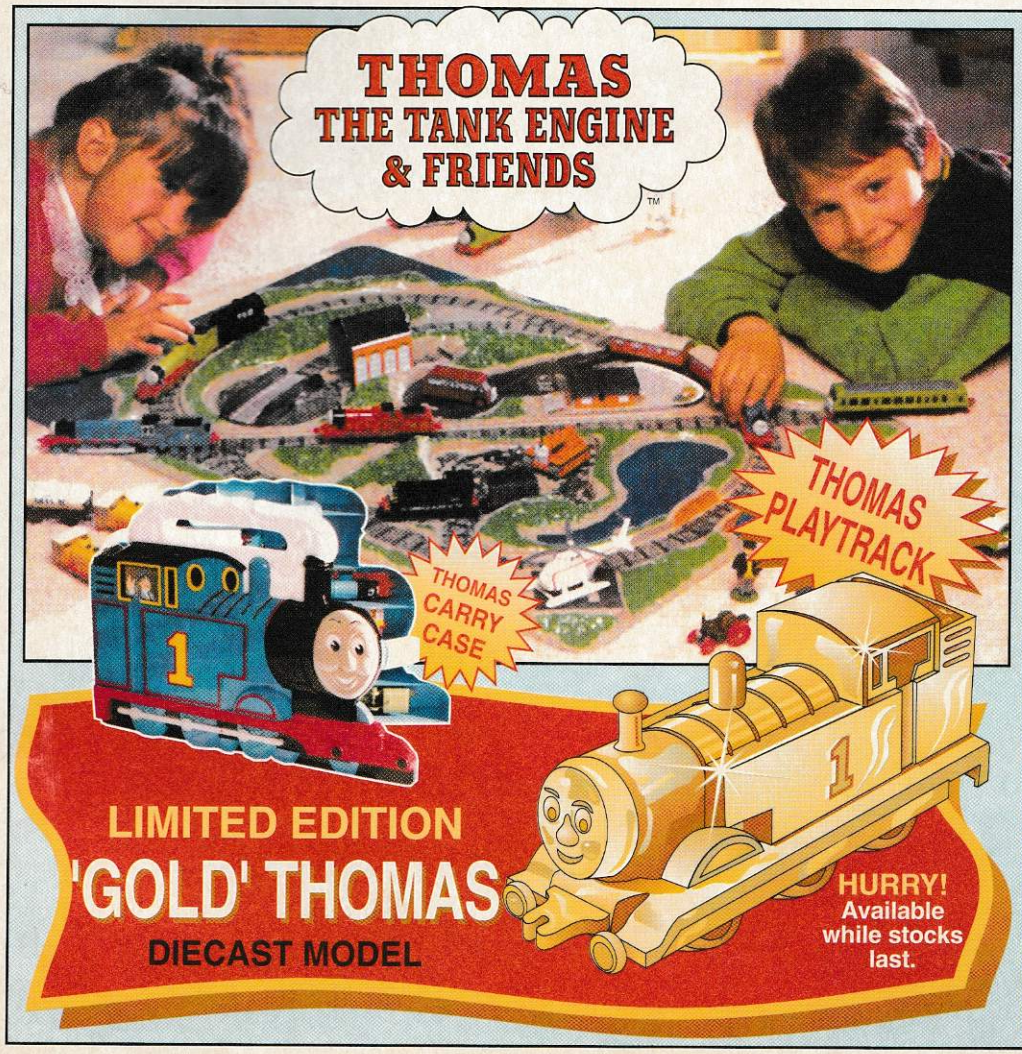

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